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## **LETTERS FROM INDIA**



John J. Kennedy  
Boston, Mass.

# LETTERS

WRITTEN FROM INDIA DURING  
THE MUTINY AND WAZIRI  
CAMPAIGNS

BY

COLONEL JOHN CHALMERS

*With a Biographical Sketch by*

ISABEL GRACE CHALMERS



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## P R E F A C E

THE following letters, written by Colonel John Chalmers during the Indian Mutiny and the subsequent Waziri campaigns (after having been lost sight of for nearly half a century), have recently been discovered in an old box during the reconstruction of the house in which his mother used to live.

It has been thought that they are of sufficient interest to justify their being printed for circulation among his family at any rate, and with this view it has been decided to reproduce them exactly as they were written, without omission or alteration of any kind. It may perhaps be considered that some of the more private and personal passages, such as that in which he speaks of himself as 'the scamp of the family,' might judiciously have been represented by



## PREFACE

asterisks. But asterisks have an aggravating way of appearing in print just when the subject seems to be getting interesting, and the lost passage, like the angler's lost trout, always tends to bulk large in the imagination, and its loss is apt to leave a feeling of exasperation in the mind. Indeed, it seems to me that it would be difficult to cut down these letters to any extent without taking away much of their local colour and the freshness of their composition; and I am sure that after considering them, and the life, as a whole, it will be readily admitted that Colonel Chalmers's family need not be ashamed of owning him—at least as its scamp!

The first of the letters is written to the late J. Monro Mackenzie of Calgary (who married his elder sister), and the remaining letters to the late Henry Bruce of Ederline (who married his younger sister), and to his mother.

In an Appendix will be found a statement of his military services, together with a number of

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letters from friends and brother officers, written when he was persuaded to memorialise the Government on the subject of his promotion. This memorial, though supported by so many well-known names, and strongly backed by the Commander-in-Chief in India, was unsuccessful.

The biographical sketch of Colonel Chalmers by his cousin, Miss I.G. Chalmers, forms, I think, a very interesting introduction to the letters. For all the care and trouble which she has so kindly devoted to the subject, I should like to express my grateful acknowledgments.

I hope that this little volume will be acceptable to those for whom it is intended, and that it may serve to keep green among them the memory of one of their own blood, who, in that tragic and heroic period of our history, did his part among the band of men who helped to save India and to win the Empire.

W. P. B.

BRAEBURN, *December 1904.*



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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

JOHN CHALMERS, the writer of the following letters, was born in 1821 at Sherbourne, in Dorsetshire. He was the son of Patrick Chalmers (at that time agent on the Lewisham Park Estate), and of Harriet Carige, his wife.

From Dr. Hanna's *Life* of John's uncle, the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D.D., D.C.L., we learn that his great-grandfather, James Chalmers, was ordained minister of Elie in 1701. In the following year James Chalmers married Agnes Merchiston, daughter of the Episcopal clergyman of Kirkpatrick Juxta, who had been ejected from his living at the time of the Revolution. Undistinguished by any superiority of talent, the simple kindliness of Mr. Chalmers's disposition endeared him to his parishioners, and there still lingers in Elie a remembrance of the familiar and affectionate intercourse which was carried on between minister and people. 'What the minister himself lacked in energy was,' Dr.



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Hanna tells us, 'amply made up by the vigorous activity of his wife. Brought up in the school of adversity, she had learned the lesson of a most thrifty economy. The estate of Radernie, purchased by her savings out of a slender income, which had to bear the burden of twelve children's education, still remains (1849) in the possession of one of her descendants; while in the after history of more than one member of her family, the care with which she watched over their infancy and education brought forth its pleasant fruits.' From Dr. Hanna we also learn that Mr. Chalmers's second son, James Chalmers, settled in the town of Anstruther, as a shipowner and thread manufacturer, where he was succeeded in a prosperous business by his son John, who married Elizabeth Hall, daughter of a wine-merchant in Crail. The words already quoted describing the minister of Elie and his wife might be repeated without alteration to describe John and Elizabeth Chalmers. He was a truly good man of kindly disposition and much respected, but talent and energy seem to have been the exclusive property of Mrs. Chalmers. The mother of fourteen children—nine sons and five daughters—she

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managed to give most of her sons a university education, and to see all her family well forward in life. During the long illness which preceded her husband's death, her talent, energy, and strict integrity enabled her to conduct all his business affairs successfully. With these claims added to the care of her large family, her hands must have indeed been full, and we can well understand the old stories which tell of her impatience with the idle gossip of her neighbours. She soon made short work, however, of those who were the bearers of evil rumours. 'That's a bad business,' she would say: 'I'll just put on my bonnet and go and ask her herself if it is true.'

Patrick was one of her younger children, and she was very anxious about his comfort when he went to England, especially when he first took up house for himself. She writes that she is sending him both bed and table linen, with some furniture, and regrets that she cannot at the same moment add a feather bed to her other gifts. She also sends him cloth for two suits of clothes. 'Two kinds of superfine cloth, enough of one to make a coat and of the other to make a coat and waistcoat. Also there is blue second cloth for pantaloons suitable for

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understood how people could rest until their liabilities were fairly cleared off. Her husband and she, for many years before his death, had laid by from time to time certain sums for the purpose of buying back the little estate of Radernie, already mentioned, which had passed into the hands of another branch of the family. Next to the wellbeing of her children, her dearest wish seems to have been the possession of Radernie; yet she unhesitatingly made use of the money that had accumulated for its purchase, to settle all outstanding claims, and thus she was able to write to Patrick at the end of the first year of her widowhood: 'All has been cleared off, and there will be a little to part among the younger children.'

In 1820 Patrick Chalmers married Harriet Carige, and it is said that crowds went to church to see the handsome bride.

His mother's letters are henceforward less businesslike and hortatory; but in fact by this time the hardest battles of her life and her keenest sorrows were past. Her whole nature had mellowed, and there is abundant evidence of the deepening of her religious life, and that the help and guidance which had never failed

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her in her trials had wrought out an unfaltering trust in God.

Some years after his marriage, Patrick Chalmers left England and became a partner with Lord Belhaven in his distillery at Wishaw.

His father-in-law had spent some years in London, and some in Dorsetshire, after leaving Ireland, where he had been land-agent on the estate of the Earl of Cavan of that day. Mr. Carige's letters are most characteristic of the man, and from an occasional reference to his post under Lord Cavan, one is led to surmise that an over-indulgence of his passion for hunting may have been the cause of that difference of opinion between them which led to his departure. He had two daughters—Mrs. Chalmers and Mrs. Copper—and when both of these were ultimately settled near Wishaw, in Lanarkshire, he broke up his little home in Dorsetshire and came to end his days beside them.

His voyage from London to Leith occupied ten days. It was made in a packet boat. 'As Mrs. Carige,' he writes, 'had been informed that boilers, when too fully charged with steam, were liable to burst, to the injury of those in

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their immediate vicinity,' they discarded the idea of travelling by steamer, and having lovely weather and pleasant company, and time being no object, they enjoyed their trip thoroughly. On arrival at Leith Mrs. Carige was despatched to Wishaw by coach, whilst Mr. Carige remained behind till his furniture and pony-trap were landed and ready for the road. This time of enforced idleness he spent in exploring the town of Edinburgh. 'I need not expatiate to you,' he writes to an English friend, 'on the handsomeness of the new town, nor the deformities of the old.' Having inspected Edinburgh, Mr. Carige laid in a stock of pies, tobacco, and other stores necessary for his journey to Wishaw, and stepping into his pony-trap, which was securely tied at the back of a cart on which his furniture was piled, he bade farewell to the last outpost of civilisation, and set forth into what appeared to him as a foreign and semi-barbarous country.

He and Mrs. Carige found a temporary home with the Coppers, but, as he writes again to his sympathetic friend—'I cannot but agree with your quaint Yankeeisms and sage remarks, particularly coinciding in opinion, that the squalling

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of brats, added to twinges of the gout, may kick up a sort of shindy in an otherwise peaceable establishment. I have therefore lately been in search of a domicile where the one may be excluded, however difficult to repel the visits of the other with a "not at home," and so we shall "cut the stick and brush" as soon as Mother can resign the household again to their lawful mistress, and get our new residence a little furbished. It having been latterly inhabited by certain of the northern unwashed, requires purification.'

He seems to have been much pleased with his new home and its large garden, but finds the neighbourhood deadly dull. 'Though the surrounding country is not without its beauties, yet a most insufferable dulness reigns—not even a pony-race within reach.'

The spring of 1839 seems to have been unexpectedly fine. He writes on May 4th:— 'Such a season as the present I doubt the inhabitants of this northern clime rarely, if ever, before witnessed. Since February we have hardly had a drop of rain, consequently these idolaters of the plough, who, I think, are usually too dilatory in sowing, have this year been

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aroused by the extraordinary influence of the sun to earlier activity. I am now writing close to an open window, and without my jacket, the heat being greater than any time last summer, as I well remember writing by the fire in June. My peas and potatoes are the only produce of the garden that stand the drought. Lettuces, onions, etc. etc., require daily ablutions, and if Lord Belhaven's prophecy prove true, we are to be favoured with no refreshing showers for six weeks to come. The present prospect of fruit here is beyond anything I ever saw before.' On June 9 of the same year he writes: 'Snow on Derby day! More like March than June.' Perhaps he is hardly sorry for this, as he never cares to praise the semi-barbaric country in which his lot is cast. The only thing in Scotland of which he speaks with unstinted enthusiasm is what he calls 'the cream of Wishaw,' and he longs for his English friend to visit him that he may prove what a good substitute it is for the 'Irish mountain dew.' 'We are within thirty miles of the Capital,' he writes, 'denominated by my countrymen "The Modern Athens," and this is the land of *feelosophers*, yet to me it appears as sterile in information as it is in

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politics. I shall be most happy to introduce you to it all, provided you visit the land o' cakes ere I be translated to the land of my fathers, but you must be forthcoming between June and October, otherwise you will find fur habiliments, to which you must have recourse, expensive machinery.'

To Scotland and its people in general Mr. Carige could not reconcile himself. To him it is a land of 'bare-legged women and half-fed beef.' He says: 'Our country butchers are a slovenly set, but are civil enough to allow me a cut where I like, leaving the bones for the Scotch to make broth of, they being all devils for spoon-meat.' The Scottish lack of humour bored him. 'As for climbing a greased pole for a leg of mutton, or catching a pig with his tail similarly besmeared, they are amusements far beyond Sawney's comprehension.' The parsimony of the Scots, and their want of interest in sport, disgusted him. 'Not a sporting character in the neighbourhood. The melodious note of a hound has not blessed my ear since in Scotland I have been. Tell Harry I am much regretting being for the next two months so far distant from Epsom, Ashkot Heath,



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Hampton, etc., and thank him for his information that "Little Wonder," an outsider, against whom 50 to 1 was betted, was last Wednesday the fortunate winner of the Derby.'

Mr. Carige, we find, was bold enough to venture into the Highlands, from which he returned in safety. He expresses himself to his English correspondent as keenly interested in all he saw and experienced during his tour. Starting from Glasgow, he crossed the Clyde at Greenock, proceeded to Loch Lomond, and on his return visited the Castle of Dumbarton.

'I am truly sorry,' he adds, 'to hear you have been on the Doctor's list. Take care of them, for though they sometimes keep things a little in trim, they help many a good fellow to kingdom come.'

In spite of his son-in-law's nationality, Mr. Carige had a sincere admiration and respect for him. Patrick Chalmers was indeed one of the most genial of men. He was the centre of a large circle of friends. His welcome was like a warm fire on a winter night, and even animals shared in his friendship. A pet canary hopped about the table at meals; a squirrel accompanied him on his journeys, concealed in the pocket of

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his overcoat; and his tact and patience with horses were unbounded. On one occasion he bought a sound and handsome mare who soon displayed an inveterate habit of backing. 'Well, my lass,' said her master, 'since you're so fond of it, I'll let you have your fill,' and quietly turning her round he backed her all the way home, a distance of two miles. She never backed again.

The Chalmers's home at Wishaw, with its genial host, its handsome Irish hostess, with her warm heart, keen sense of humour, and ready wit, must have been very attractive. They had three blue-eyed, fair-haired children—a boy and two girls. As early as 1830 the boy, John, was sent for his education to Edinburgh, where he lived with his uncle, Charles Chalmers, first at Park Place, and then at Merchiston School. To distinguish him from his eldest cousin he was called by his companions 'English John,' a name which, as a boy, he resented, and would ask indignantly, 'Should you be a horse if you were born in a stall?'

Park Place is now pulled down, but in those days it was a pleasant street close to George Square, where many people of interest lived.

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During John's time there, Burke and Hare began their horrid trade. The mystery that enveloped the perpetrators of the crimes added to the panic they inspired, and created quite a reign of terror among the inhabitants of Edinburgh. John's two little girl cousins attended a school in George Square kept by a Miss Shields. It was so near their home, they were allowed at first to come and go by themselves, but a servant was sent for them as soon as their father became alarmed by the rumours spread abroad of children being decoyed and murdered in some mysterious manner. 'English John,' however, did not think one servant sufficient protection for the girls, so he raised a band of brave men, consisting of his cousins and some of their school companions, to form a bodyguard for them. This guard he commanded himself, armed with a red-hot poker.

At Merchiston Castle, though we find a few poetic effusions in some of the early numbers of the *School Magazine*, one of his companions writes of him: 'His talent lay chiefly in practical mathematical departments, and he was one of a class who, on fine midsummer mornings, used to go off hours before breakfast to plant

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their surveying poles and flags on the summits of Braid, Blackford, and Craiglockhart Hills, while engaged in a trigonometrical and geodetical survey of the then newly proposed parish of Morningside.'

In 1839 we find his grandfather, Mr. Carige, writing to an English friend:—'The bearer, my Grandson, the young Anglo-Scot John Chalmers, a promising youth bidding fair to reach 5 feet 11 inches in his stockings, has been considered a sufficient escort for his two sisters. He has left them at Clifton under the care of Miss Barrett, for the purpose of putting a finish of English polish on the Scottish basis.'

His education ended, John Chalmers joined his father at the distillery at Wishaw. At this time he was over six feet in height, and well made. His blue eyes and fair curling hair set off a face not otherwise handsome. After getting some insight into the business at home, he was despatched to Ireland, with a view to his gaining experience, and at the same time extending their connection in that quarter.

This was his first taste of independence, and one can well imagine with what eager hopefulness he looked forward to the journey, little

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knowing he was hastening to meet the tragedy of his life. Business was neglected amongst the charms of Irish hospitality, but, alas ! among his many true, generous, warm-hearted friends, there was one of a different mould, the impecunious father of many daughters, who had no intention of bestowing favours on the lad without exacting payment, and more than payment, to the uttermost farthing.

John returned home, engaged to a woman many years older than himself. He soon after married her, and settled down near his father at Wishaw. Time passed. The aggressive economy of his wife's management perhaps blinded him to what was going on, so that the crash when it came wellnigh unhinged him. When his father sent for him and asked for an explanation of bills for goods ordered in the name of 'Mrs. Chalmers,' he was aghast. On his way back to his own house, other revelations were made to him by a clerk in the office, which filled him with despair. He could not face his trouble, the unknown depths of it. He fled from home and enlisted.

The suspense of his parents, until they found out what had become of their son, was most

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painful ; and to his mother, who was so proud of him, the shock of knowing her son to be a private soldier was terrible.

Mr. Mackenzie, John's brother-in-law, offered to visit him in barracks and see how he fared. He gave a graphic account on his return of the way the men treated the new recruit. He was already their master, their beloved master. When the visit was at an end, and John was to accompany Mr. Mackenzie to the station, his willing servants were in attendance ready to fetch and carry. In fact, Mr. Mackenzie found they did all the menial work for John that they dared.

He paid one visit to his mother after this. For her sake he petitioned to go home in plain clothes, but whether this was granted or not is not known. It was not long before he was bought out of the army.

In a short account of John Chalmers, written after his death by his cousin, David Chalmers, for *The Merchistonian*, we find:—‘He entered the service of the Hon. East India Co. in 1848, and was connected at first with the sappers and miners going out to India in 1849. This service he left not long after ; and having passed as a

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civil engineer, he officiated as executive engineer on the Lahore and Peshawur Road.

‘While engaged in this civil appointment the fearful Indian Mutiny broke out, and in May 1857 he raised and drilled a body of about 400 men for one of the new Punjaub regiments. In the same year he was appointed Adjutant of the 24th Punjaub Infantry, and he served with that corps, acting also as field engineer throughout the siege of Delhi, at the assault of which he commanded the ladder party with General Nicholson’s column. Before the assault was made, he and his men laid the ten-gun battery which made the first breach in the walls. Within two years he took active part in over seventy engagements, of greater or less importance, and was only once wounded, and that by the sword of a dead foe.’

His letters should now be left to speak for themselves, and it is only necessary to add, that perhaps his most remarkable gift, to quote again from his cousin, ‘was his power of at once gaining the entire confidence, respect, and loving obedience of the natives whom he commanded in his civil and military operations.

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With his servants he was sometimes severe and sometimes kind, but always just.'

In one or two of his letters he speaks of men in his regiment becoming Christians. The Scriptures were read among them, but he did not try to persuade them to make their choice. He would have been too much afraid of hypocrisy; but he sympathised with the difficulties of natives in this matter as in all things, and it is told of him that when two men of different caste were to partake of the communion for the first time, he took one on one side of him and one on the other, and knelt between them.

As time went on his character developed into a strong and steadfast one. He could be relied on absolutely in the evil hour. In fact he seems to have appeared at his best in times of anxiety and danger, and when things and people generally were untoward.

Even in his boyhood he is said to have had 'always a very strong dash of erratic originality in many of his views, sayings, and doings,' and it is not surprising that, in later life, after all he had passed through, there should be a certain twist at times in his views and temper. His religious character certainly showed the



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brightest when amongst those who were indifferent or opposed to what he came so firmly to believe in.

In 1868 John Chalmers, for the first time after twenty years of continued Indian service, was sent home to England on medical certificate, as his eyesight had begun to show symptoms of a serious nature.

He returned to his Indian duties at the close of 1870, and came home finally in 1880. His eyesight had by this time almost completely failed him. He settled at Paignton, in Devonshire, where he was devotedly attended by his second wife, until his death at the age of sixty-two.

He often said that the happiness of life lay in the fulfilment of its duties, and when speaking of the efforts made in the present day to promote the happiness of the working-classes, he remarked : ‘ Many people seem to forget that the proper performance of his daily work is in itself a real pleasure to a *true* working man, be his position high or low.’

## LETTER I

GOOJERANWALLA, *30th May 1857.*

MY DEAR JOHN,—Since the last mail our communications have been cut off for some time, but it is hoped they are now open. However, to secure some news, I have written a few lines at intervals of some days, first to Bruce, next to Hughes, and now to you, and sent them by different routes, in hopes that some one or other would go safe, but, from what I hear to-day, the others have all been kept back at the Lahore post office until all was safe on the route, and will go with this.

You must have heard by the last mail of the massacres of Merutt and Delhi, and no doubt have felt that I also was in a mess. Well, things did look bad enough here, and are far from clear yet, but here we have had no murders, but some hard fighting at Ferozepore and Murdan, near Peshawur, with the mutineers. At the latter place, when the 55th N. I. rose, their Colonel, Col. Spottiswoode, one of my oldest friends in the Punjab.

## LETTERS [30TH MAY

was so much distressed to think his regiment should do so, that he committed suicide.

General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief of India, has died; the newspapers say of cholera, private reports say suicide. He, from his ignorance of the country, had raised a storm that has already cost hundreds of English lives, and may cost us India, and when done he was not the man to meet it.

In the Punjaub we have met the rebels fairly—beaten them at every point, and sent a large force of about 1000 men from the Punjaub, and a lot from the hills to relieve Merutt and Delhi. Brigadier-General Chamberlain, a splendid young fellow, commands, and is in the room as I write, talking about the affair. The army is passing here yesterday and to-day, making forced marches.

From the newspapers you will hear horrid accounts of the Delhi affair, but the one half will never be published. The brutes oiled over and set fire to one lady, killed children at the breast; and 50 ladies and children who got into the palace of the king, who, the rascal, was put on the throne by us, and has received £12,000 a month of pension for years, were, after remaining there 5 days, stripped naked, paraded through the crowded streets of the largest city in India in that state, under a burning sun, and

1857]      GOOJERANWALLA

then killed with spears slowly and in cold blood—ladies and children who never knew what it was before to walk a mile. Never mention this to those who might have had friends there, but it is true, as I have seen the Government report; but the retribution will and must be heavy, both on the wretches who have committed, and on the Court of Directory who have by their mismanagement caused, such horrors.

Love to all, and believe that I am at present as safe as any man with an English face can be in India; and believe me, my dear John, your aff. brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

How I regret now that I ever left the army, as I would give freely 10 years of my life to strike a blow against such wretches, and as an engineer I am floored, as the amount plundered from the treasuries, and the expense of this affair, will stop all works of our sort for years to come.

## LETTER II

GOOJERANWALLA, 13th June 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Last mail I wrote to you, to Mackenzie, and to Mr. Hughes, and as everything is all right in Bombay, I have no doubt all the letters reached safe enough. I

## LETTERS

[13TH JUNE

will now send you an account of how things stand here, and perhaps if you were to send the letter to Wishaw and Kilwinning, it might be acceptable.

Below Lucknow we have no information, but there two Native Infantry regts. and one Cavalry regt. have mutinied and gone off to Seetapore, a notoriously disaffected district. In Cawnpore all is right at present, or at least by the last accounts. At Agra the Native Infantry and Cavalry regts. are disarmed, the European reg. and Artillery being strong enough to have done so. At Allygurh, Futtigurh, and Nusserabad the native troops have mutinied, but most of the Europeans have escaped. At Hansi and Hissar they have mutinied, and killed most of the European Officers and civilians. At Merutt and Delhi they have played the mischief, killing not only the European men, but doing so and more to the ladies and children. At Umballa the European regiments and artillery kept things right, and at Kurnaul and Loodianah there are no troops at present. You will easily find all these places in any good map of India, and they include all the military stations I can recollect at present between Oude and the Punjaub. Now for the Punjaub, in which I am more particularly interested.

On the river Sutledge, which bounds it, are two military stations—Philour and Ferozepore. At the former place there is a Fort manned by a Company of European Infantry and one of Eu. Artillery. The 3rd Native Infantry live outside. Here there has been no row, as the guns of the fort would have polished off the Sepoys quick enough.

At Ferozepore two N. I. regts., the 45th and 57th, mutinied; the 61st European Reg. held the Fort and Magazine, and the artillery and cavalry went out against the mutineers, and all of them who are not killed or in jail have had to throw away their arms and run.

On the road from Philour to Lahore is Jullunder. Here two N. I. and one N. C. regt. mutinied, failed in their attempt to take the artillery guns, and have started off towards Delhi, followed by Europeans and artillery, who, it is hoped, will overtake them. Further up the same road is Umritsar, which is situated just as Philour, viz., the Fort is held by Europeans, and the native troops are helpless.

Next on the river Ravee, are Lahore and Moulton. At both these places the European troops, having the first news of the outbreak, took time by the forelock and disarmed the native troops before they were prepared—4 regiments at the former, and 2 at the latter

## LETTERS [13TH JUNE

place being disarmed, and their lines constantly guarded by European Artillery and Infantry, quietness is the best of their game.

Forty miles north from Lahore you will see Goojeranwalla, where I live. Here, on the first news of the row, the Dy. Commr., ex-Ass. Comm., and myself, who, with their clerk and my overseer, constituted the European residents, raised and armed a lot of the district police, and turned out the 50 men of the 46th N. I., who guarded the treasury, sending them off quietly to their regiment at Sealkot, 30 miles towards the Eastward. We got the Gov. treasure into my house, which, with the garden, we garrisoned, and soon had a force of 300 Infantry and 125 Cavalry, raised and armed from the natives of the district whom we thought we could trust.

At Sealkot the 46th N. I. and half the 9th Cavalry remain still quiet, but we daily expect an outbreak; however, we shall be, I think, right enough here, as they will most likely take the direct route to Umritsar, which does not pass here. Up still further is Jhelum. Here were 2 N. I. regts.—the 39th and 14th, with no Europeans. Before the row was known to the natives there, they sent the 39th off to Dera Ishmail Khan, where a Seikh Regt. will take good enough care of them, but the 14th are

daily and hourly expected to rise, in which case they must come this way. We shall try to meet them at Muzerabad with our police, and with the advantage of a river that can only be crossed by boats, and the country people in our favour, I am sanguine that we shall give a good account of them—that is, if they attempt to cross, which I think would be madness for them.

Still higher up is Rawal Pindi, where the 58th N. I. have been disarmed, and are safe enough watched by a European regt. and a Ghoorka regt., which is nearly as good. At Attock there are some Europeans, and with a good fort, quite enough to keep things all right.

At Peshawur and Naushera—for they are so near they may almost be counted as one place—there were 2 European rgts. and 9 of N. I. and 1 of native Cavalry. One, the 55th, rose rather too soon at a place 20 or 30 miles from Peshawur, and thus gave warning to the Europeans, who disarmed all the rest but 2 regts. of N. I., who are supposed to be trustworthy, viz. the 21st and Khelat-i-Ghilzie Regts. Col. Nicholson went at the 55th with his hill regt. of police and some arty. and cavalry, and killed 150, took 100 prisoners, of whom the following day he blew 40 away from guns, and hung the rest,



## LETTERS [13TH JUNE

and the remainder of the regt. he hunted into the hills, where they were murdered by the hill tribes; so they have had a lesson of the folly of mutiny. He has also raised large numbers of the hill tribes, who are professional robbers and murderers, and set them to watch the disarmed regts., and at a hint of disturbance they will cut the throats of every man of them.

From this account you will see that in the Punjaub as yet hardly a European life has been lost, and that we have a fair chance of holding our own until European troops come out from England to our assistance. Some few are already dropping in from Madras and Bombay, but, should our attack on Delhi prove a failure, it is to be feared the whole country will rise, and that they will require all their Europeans in their own territories. We hope, and all the well-informed people whom I have seen expect, that 30 or 40 thousand men must ere this have left England to our assistance. We are at present situated thus:—18 regiments are in open mutiny, and 13 are disarmed, and of the rest of the 10 Cavalry and 74 Infantry regts. of this Presidency, I do not believe *one* will be true if they get a chance to rise.

It is lamentable to think that this should all have come from a foolish attempt of Gen. Anson to interfere with the caste of the men



## LETTERS [22ND JUNE

*mutineers*, who come out daily and give battle to our soldiers, in each of which sorties 400 to 500 are killed, Gov. say in *their* accounts that the *misguided* Sepoys amount to *about* 5000, who are dispirited and without a leader. Yet with fully that number of staunch troops they do not attack, but have ordered 12,000 or 14,000 men to reinforce the army there.

As I have no copy of my last letter, I forget how many regts. were then in arms against the Government, but at present we *know* of 27 in arms and 18 or 14 disarmed, besides which we fear much for the safety of Cawnpore and Allahabad, from which places we have had no news for upwards of a week, and in which there are 3 native regts. each.

I do not think anything could be more disgraceful than the conduct of the Government everywhere, except in the Punjaub where the Lieut. - Gov. took things in his own hands, and pitched all orders from higher powers into the waste - paper basket. Down - country the Mutiny commenced by burning barracks and stations, regts. refusing to take cartridges, and such like nonsense. The Gov. fired proclamations at them, and eventually took the strong measure of, what do you think, to punish two of the most mutinous?—why, paid them up in full, dismissed them from the service, and allowed

them to roam about the country to rob and incite other regiments to mutiny. The natural result followed. More than half the army is now in arms against us. Hundreds of Europeans have been murdered in cold blood; European ladies violated, publicly exposed, and then tortured to death. Soldiers have amused themselves by pitching European children about from bayonette to bayonette: in fact, they have tortured and murdered every one they could overpower with a white face, or who, however black, professed Christianity, and this without respect to age or sex. And now, to crown all, the whole country of Rohilcund, the population of which is the most warlike in India, is in arms against us. Troops are ordered and arriving daily from Madras, Bombay, Ceylon, Pegue, Singapore, the Mauritius, and the Persian Gulf. Steamers are out in all directions to intercept the troops *en route* for China, and 30,000 fresh English troops have been applied for from England: in fact, they are now doing on a large scale what they should have done to a moderate extent 3 months ago, and which would have then saved thousands, and I expect before the row is over, hundreds of thousands of lives.

Now for the Punjaub Gov. Here the same sort of thing commenced as below, and, as this

## LETTERS

[22ND JUNE

was a new and most warlike country, the danger was greater ; but fortunately we had men ready to meet it. The Lt.-Gov. burned the proclamations of the Govt., set a most excellent officer, Col. Nicholson (whose life has been spent in border warfare), at the first regt. which broke out (the 55th N. I.), and Col. N., instead of proclamations, paying up, dismissing, etc., went at them with a nice little force of cavalry and arty., killed 150 on the spot, took 100 prisoners, 40 of whom he on the following day blew away from guns in front of the whole frontier army; and most of the others he hanged. The rest of the regt. he hunted into the Levat Hills, when those who consented to become Mohammedans were made so and sold into slavery, one old native officer going so low as 6 pence three farthings, and the others having been *forcibly* made Mohammedans were murdered.

All this sounds cruel, but look to the results of the two systems. That of Hindustan I have told you ; but in the Punjaub, although we have had mutineers, we have fought and licked them everywhere. We have disarmed all we could overpower without a serious row, and we overawe the rest with cannon. Not one single European or well-disposed native has been killed as yet, and now, having got things into a pretty

fair state, we have spared 1½ European and 8 Punjaubee regiments to the assistance of the lower provinces.

One of the most extraordinary features of the whole business is, that the officers of every reg. without exception believe in their own men, and only awake from their error when they find the muskets pointed at them. The Gov. Gen. has pardoned and reaccepted the services of two native regts. after they had committed themselves; one took the first opportunity of again breaking out, yet he still trusts the other, which will do the same the very first opportunity. The best judges assert that there is *not one* native regt. to be depended upon out of the 74 in the Bengal army list.

You may easily imagine how disgusted I feel that my being a civilian prevents my taking any active part against these scoundrels; but as engineering is floored for many a day to come, and as volunteer soldiering will not 'keep the pot boiling,' I am amusing myself drilling 200 Seikhs who have been newly raised and of whom I hope to make soldiers. And I have applied to Sir John Lawrence to get me service in the army of some native prince who is still well disposed to us. If I succeed, I may still be at the taking and sack of Delhi—and I can assure you that my vengeance is so excited

## LETTERS [23RD JUNE

against the wretches, that I would gladly join in the compact said to be entered into, to give no quarter.—With love to all, I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely, JOHN CHALMERS.

### LETTER IV

GOOJERANWALLA, 23rd June 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Since I wrote to you yesterday there is little news of importance except such as every day brings, viz. of fresh revolts. Cawnpore, I fear, is gone, and if so, a young lady, a sister of a most intimate friend of mine, is in a bad way. She was on her way here from Gloucestershire, and was stopped at Cawnpore on her way.

This morning I got a telegraphic express from Sir John Lawrence appointing me to a new Seikh regiment now on its way to Delhi. It has the start of me about 140 miles, but I hope to overtake it by the day after to-morrow, as I start to-night and take nothing with me but a saddle and bridle, a valise with two or three shirts, a sword and revolver, and a flask of brandy and a few biscuits. Horses I shall borrow as the one I am on gets knocked up, and ride on so all night and stop in villages all day when it is too hot to travel.

The country through which I pass is pretty quiet, and I expect no interruption. I take no servants or anything except what I mention, except a few shillings to pay for the horses I shall borrow from the villagers, and a bill for £40 to buy me a good horse as soon as I join. My own horses it would be a hopeless thing to try to get down, as the reg. will go as fast as possible, and has already such a start that, even were I to get my horses up, they would be so knocked up as to be worth nothing for some time; but I shall miss my strong, well-tried Punjaabee and Bokhara horses, as I do not like those of Hindoostan much. Again, I am always practising my own for fun at all sorts of work with sword and lance, and the beast I buy will have all to learn. Never mind—that amount should buy me a strong enough brute—beauty I shall not put in the scale at present, and I suspect he will find before I have him an hour that the best of his game will be perfect obedience.

I do not know anything about this regt. I am to join, as Sir John merely says it is a new Seikh levy, and on the road to Delhi. It may be horse, foot, or artillery. However, it is commanded by a very decent fellow whom I know well, and I think it is a Sapper corps. I do not even know whether I am to be 2nd in



## LETTERS [27TH JUNE

Command, Adjutant, or Quarter-Master, but I hope and expect the former.

I shall continue my letters as I have opportunity.

I write to my mother to-day, but merely say I am off down-country to another appointment. You can tell her what you please, but if I know her she is not at all likely to fret or feel uneasy.—Love to Helen, and believe me, yours sincerely.

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER V

LOODIANAH, 27th June 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I arrived here during the night before last, and was pretty considerably tired, having come 180 miles in two days and nights—the last 30 of it through a very unsettled country. Indeed, I often wonder how 2 Europeans armed only with sword and pistols could have managed it; but no one interrupted us.

We saw the fine Station of Jullundhur quite deserted—lots of the houses and barracks burned down, and the whole place looking miserable. At Philour we found a force under Gen. Nicholson, of half a European regt., 12 guns with Eu.

Arty., and 2 regts. of Native Infantry and half a regt. of Native Cavalry. The previous day Gen. N. had paraded the whole in such a position that the guns ready loaded with grape were turned upon the Sepoys in close column, who were not loaded. He then went up to them and told them that if a man moved or offered to load his musket, the guns would open at once on them. He then ordered them to ground arms, which they had to do at once, and were marched off the ground. At Philour Fort I met lots of old friends—Gulliver of the Engineers, the Commr. of the new corps of Seikh pioneers to which I am attached, Oliphant of the Engineers, under whom I served at Jhelum, and all the officers of the 3rd N. I., whose regt. went away and left them, but did not murder more than one or two. Everything busy in the Fort: new batteries being raised, and ammunition, provisions, etc., arriving in a constant stream; an officer and European sentries constantly on duty, and no native soldier admitted. After a few words with these old friends, who congratulated and envied me on my luck in going to Delhi, I got a glass of brandy and water from one of them to wash some of the dust of my 2 days' and nights' travel out of my throat, and welcome it was as the first thing I had tasted except native bread and very warm and nasty

## LETTERS [27TH JUNE

water. *N.B.*—If you want to know real pleasure, travel so long with the thermometer 135 in the sun and 118 in the shade, and then try a very large tumbler of brandy and iced water. I bet that, like me, you will call for a second.

Gulliver, my C. O., told me that, as he was to halt a day to get arms for the men, I had better come over here to rest and refresh myself, as Mr. Ricketts, the judge, is a friend of mine, and keeps a comfortable bachelor's house. I arrived about 11, found all the Europeans in the place, some 6 or 7, living with Ricketts, and an officer of the 4th Seikh infantry, whom I knew, lying severely wounded by a musket ball, received in trying to prevent the Jul-lundhur mutineers crossing the river Sutledge.

I got a good bathe, but thought I could never get cleaned from the mud formed of dust and perspiration. However, I did my best, sat down to an excellent breakfast with claret and iced water, quail-pies and everything desirable after two such days as I had passed, and then went to sleep in a well cooled room.

They called me to dinner, and I got up, but went to sleep again immediately afterwards, and this morning find myself *all right* and ready to start for Delhi with my corps.

It is certainly fearful odds we have to contend with, but I think no one who has seen the

spirit which animates every European can for a moment doubt the result if troops are speedily sent from England. If not, the case will be a bad one, as let us lick them as we do in every action and kill 400 or 500 of them to our 30 or 40, yet their numbers enable them to afford this loss, and we must be used up in time. Besides, although the Seikhs and Punjaubees are now decidedly with us, would they continue so after one reverse? I fear not.

My host, Mr. Ricketts, did one of the most plucky things here that I ever knew. He found that 3 regts., 2 inftry. and 1 cavly., were coming down from Jullundhur to cross the river Sutledge towards this place. He went out to meet this force with 40 men of the 4th Seikhs, a few police, and 2 guns drawn by his own horses.

With this force he opposed them at the river for some hours, killing 50, and obliging them to separate into different parties, and in the end brought off his guns safe, and his small party with a loss of 9, and Lt. Williams severely wounded. Every European shows the same spirit, and *it must succeed*. You cannot imagine how proud I am that the Lt. Gov. should have sent me to Delhi, and that I am the only civilian he has asked. Besides, to take another point of view, in a case of this kind a man is *safer* fighting with an army than living in his

## LETTERS [1ST JULY

own house. We march to-night, and I will write to you from Umballa, where we will arrive in 4 or 5 days.

Give my love to my Mother and Helen and all, and kiss the bairns for me ; and believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER VI

CAMP PUNJAB SAPPERS,  
RAJPOORA, NEAR UMBALLA,  
*July 1st, 1857.*

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I have no news of any kind since I wrote to you from Loodianah, but I now send a few lines merely to let you see how we get on.

We hope, if no work detains us on the way, to be before Delhi by the morning of the 8th, but have heard that we have to burn a few villages on the road, the inhabitants of which have stopped the mails and murdered the passengers.

In such a case, all we can do at present is to burn the village and hang the head men, as we cannot spare troops to protect either mails or electric telegraph.

It has been proposed to burn every village

within 3 miles of the road, and shoot every man not a soldier or camp follower found within these limits after a certain notice; and this, no doubt, would be effectual, but I hope it will not be ordered until we have got past, as I should not like to be delayed from the grand business, and that hanging and village burning, although a necessary, is but a dirty business at best.

Now that I have seen something of my new corps, I suppose you will expect an account of them. Well, here goes—but it is not flattering.

The Muzbees are the descendants of men of the very lowest caste, who became Seikhs. They are notoriously the *bravest scoundrels* in the country, being in time of war soldiers, but in time of peace usually relaxing their minds by *Thuggee* and *Dacoitee*—two words meaning organised systems of murder and gang robbery. Not a nice lot, you will say, but the main point is that they will fight for pay, and we cannot be nice just now.—Love to all, and believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

I expect my next will be from Delhi.

I enclose an extract from a Lahore newspaper I picked up at Loodianah. I do not know the editor, but shall punch his head on my return. What right has he to speak

## LETTERS

[5TH JULY

about a *respectable family*? Your *washerwoman* is, I hope, *respectable*. Otherwise his article is well meant but too late, as Sir John Lawrence was beforehand with him.

## LETTER VII

KURNAUL, 5th July 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I wrote to you the other day from Rajpoora, and posted the letter at Umballa, and you will see by a look at the map that we are getting on towards Delhi at the rate of 20 to 25 miles a night, which is double the usual marches even in cold weather, whilst this is fearfully hot, and we do not wait for tents or anything.

Although there had been a severe action at Loodianah with the mutineers, who lost 58, whilst our men lost some 15, with a European officer severely wounded and a native officer killed, yet the storm had passed, and the country was pretty quiet, and the only signs of it I saw were the skeletons, and the remains of red jackets I noticed near the roadside.

From there we have found the road clear so far, but in Umballa the church, which is the largest in India, has been strongly fortified and turned into an hospital for the wounded. I

went with the engineer to see it, and I can assure you the effect was something new. The yard was surrounded with a ditch and strong earthen rampart with bastions at the corners, mounted with heavy 24 lb. guns, and the gateways defended by 18 and 12 pounders. The windows were all built up and crenelled for musketry, whilst the church itself was filled with beds for the sick and provisions for some months, in case of a siege.

To-day 140 of the most severely wounded men of our army were brought in here on their way to Umballa, and all night we heard heavy firing, although Delhi is 70 miles off. We start to-night, and expect to have to fight our way in, the last day, unless they can spare guns and cavalry to escort us in. We shall reach, if all is right, in 4 days.

The wounded officers tell us that all along we have only been able to *hold our own against the attacks* of the enemy, and that we have done nothing against the city, and cannot, until large reinforcements arrive. This we hardly suspected to be so bad, as the Govt. publish flourishing accounts, and private are stopped as much as possible, so it may be some time before I can write another to you, but I shall lose no opportunity.

In one attack of the enemy on the 23rd ult.



## LETTERS [10TH JULY

our troops were so hard pressed that the officers were going to spike and abandon the guns, but a Seikh regt. came up, having marched 30 miles in the sun that day, and turned the scale to our favour most gallantly.

Indeed the Punjaub altogether has afforded a strong contrast to the imbecility shown elsewhere, and if India is saved, Sir John Lawrence has done it, and should be made a Duke.

Love to Mother, Helen, and all ; and believe me, my dear Bruce, your aff. Brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

Our men, although recruits, are in fine spirits, and we have not had one desertion in spite of the killing marches we have made.

## LETTER VIII

CAMP BEFORE DELHI,  
10th July 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I arrived here yesterday about 10 o'clock in the morning, after marching all night since 5 the previous afternoon. We had charge of some 150 carts and 200 camels, and consequently the rear-guard, which I commanded, was some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  or 2 miles behind the advance.

After the advance-guard had got into camp

a party of mutineers, infantry and cavalry, came out from the city, got *round* our camp unobserved, and attacked my convoy.

The drivers bolted like fun, with the camels and bullocks. I with my party pushed on, and, passing the carts loaded with articles of comparatively small value, got up to those containing ammunition, which I protected. My men, although marched off their legs and all recruits, stood well. and showed no sign of bolting. We were not attacked at close quarters, as a large force came out of camp to our support, and gave battle to the mutineers.

I had a sergeant who was in charge of the stores killed, but no one else even touched. In the engagement that ensued the mutineers are said to have lost 500 killed, besides wounded, but I do not believe it, as no one that I have seen has *himself* counted more than 196 dead bodies, and I do not believe in their having had time to carry in their dead.

We lost 50 killed and about 100 wounded, so that altogether it was a sharp beginning to my service.

By afternoon I got my carts and camels collected, and brought into camp—every one—and found my way to the Sapper mess-house, where I find 20 Engineers live in one room, dining off an old billiard-table that escaped destruction,

## LETTERS [11TH AUG.

and the edges of which they have cut off. At night some sleep on the table, and some in the verandah.

Up to date we *know* of 37 regts. in mutiny, and 16 disarmed, out of the 74.

Things here are much worse than my worst fears, and should *very strong* reinforcements not arrive soon, good-bye to English rule in India; but I will write all about it as soon as I have seen for myself—that is, if one of these shells—that *will* burst near our house—does not prevent me.

Love to Mother and Helen, and believe me, yours sincerely, JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER IX

CAMP DELHI, 11th Aug. 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—On coming in from a hard night's work in the batteries, I have just heard that a mail starts to-day, so I, although very tired and sleepy, write a few lines that you and my Mother and sisters may know I am still all right.

We are still holding on here waiting for reinforcements, having every 2nd or 3rd day to fight some 10 or 12 times our number of the

1857]

## DELHI

mutineers, whom we regularly lick. We have had in all some 80 engagements, and although *always* successful, yet the inevitable loss reduces our *little* force surely, if gradually. Will it be believed, that in weather when it was always considered impossible for Europeans to go outside, 3000 or less have here for two months held their own against 40,000 or 50,000 natives, equally well armed and drilled, and superior in artillery and every necessary of war.

We anxiously wait for reinforcements from Calcutta, from which direction we can get no certain information, but report says Lucknow and Cawnpore are as bad as, or worse off than, ourselves, and that *all Europeans* at the latter place are murdered. The Lahore route is the only one open now.—Love to all, and believe me, your aff. brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

*Address :*

ENS. CHALMERS, Adj. P. S. & M.,  
Head-Qrs. Camp, LAHORE.

## LETTER X

CAMP BEFORE DELHI,  
28th Aug. 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I now take up my pen to let you know how things are going on here, and

## LETTERS [28TH AUG.

as this is an extra mail and we are only allowed a limited amount of weight each, I must write as close as I can.

I came down here in an indefinite sort of position, attached to a corps of 800 Punjaub Sappers, and on my first arrival had lots of work with them. Raids into the enemy's country for timber and stores; reducing refractory villages and hanging their head men, and shooting all we could find armed; varied by nights in the trenches and batteries, where we had to work night after night at the same time that we afforded pleasant amusement to the enemy, who usually kept up a steady fire of grape, canister, and musketry on us; but now that my corps is increased to 700 bayonettes, and men are on the way down and daily expected, to raise it to 1100, I am struck off all duty—appointed by the C. in C. Ensign and Adjutant, and labour from morning till night teaching stupid recruits and larky young officers the mysteries of the goose-step and how to shoot. Well, if I am not quite so pleasantly, I am fully as usefully employed, and I suppose that when the storm takes place I will find some way of getting into it or other.

We now number about 9000 men here, of whom 4000 are European soldiers, and the rest

1857]

## DELHI

Punjaub recruits, and with these, please God, we will take Delhi in a few days, garrisoned as it is by 24,000 regular and first-rate troops, and any number of well-armed blackguards—or expend ourselves in the attempt.

The day before yesterday we got the Home News, and I can hardly say whether indignation, disgust, or a sense of the ludicrous prevailed when we found that England was to send out round the Cape, and consequently to arrive in 6 or 7 months, 3000 men to quell a mutiny of 80 or 90 thousand well-armed and disciplined troops, who have a whole country with them, and who have already murdered every man, and done far worse to every woman bearing the name of Briton, who lived out of Calcutta, the Punjaub, or the one or two stations where there were considerable bodies of European troops; and then the papers wind up with a lot of bombast, alluding, I suppose, to the 3000, who by the time they reach the scene of action will be reduced by sickness to 800 or 900, about what a mighty empire does to assert its injured majesty!

Well, here we are cut off from all communication with any place below Agra, with information that we are to get no assistance from Calcutta, and with the Punjaub still staunch, but of course doubtful, but for all this with

## LETTERS [28TH AUG.

good hearts, and a full intention of doing our duty and taking Delhi.

The day before yesterday the enemy sent out 6 regiments of infantry with a lot of cavalry and guns to our rear, when one of our Punjaub men, Gen. Nicholson, went after them with a small party, licked them, took all their camp equipage and 13 guns, and killed a lot, but unfortunately was not strong enough to prevent the return to the city of most of them. This is where our want of numbers tells.

I shall constantly write a few lines every mail to let you know how we get on.

Give my love to all, and believe me, my dear Bruce, your aff. brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

I enclose a line or two to Mother, but really can say little that would interest her.

## LETTER XI

CAMP BEFORE DELHI,  
28th Aug. 1857

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I have just heard that a mail starts to-day, and so sit down to write you a few lines, from which you will see that we are still on the outside of this accursed city.

1857]

## DELHI

Our force is small, but with reinforcements we have lately had from the Punjaub we hope to try it soon, fearful as the odds against us are ; and although I am now as adjutant struck off all work in the trenches, and everything except the drill and discipline of my corps, I hope to manage so as to be one of the first inside.

The weather is very hot to live in tents, and lots of our friends go off daily from wounds and sickness, but I am very well, and although I hope I have done my duty, untouched in any way.

As we are only allowed two letters each by this, which is an extra post, and you will see Bruce's, I send you very few lines, but I know you value them in proportion to the affection that dictates them and not by quantity.—I am, my dear Mother, your very aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS,

*Ensign and Adjlt., Punjaub Pioneers*

## LETTER XII

CAMP BEFORE DELHI,

15th Sept. 1857.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I have only time for a line to say that at length we have walked over the walls of Delhi, and during yesterday have



## LETTERS [15TH SEPT.

taken about one-third of the city, the fighting being still going on by reliefs of men who come back to camp to rest.

I suppose you will be anxious to know how it feels to attack a breach in a wall. Well, all I can say is that those who are killed know nothing about it. Those who are not, perhaps do not like it; but for those who, like me, escape, it is rather a pleasant excitement, and I think on the whole superior to hunting.

First, although you see lots fall about you, somehow it never occurs to you that your hour may come. Then, what with looking after and keeping your men together, you have no time to *funk*. Our loss has been *awfully* severe, Gen. Nicholson amongst the rest, and the only man here we could depend upon to lead.

I do not yet know how things may turn out with us, but the taking of Delhi must at any rate dishearten the rebels and cut them off from supplies. Will England not send us assistance instead of talking in Parliament?

I have before me a list of 240 *commissioned officers known* to have been murdered; and when the clerks, sergeants, privates, poor European civilians, and all the wives and families, not to speak of the numbers killed in fair fighting, are added to this, the list will, I think, open people's eyes in England.

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## DELHI

Just as we got into the city we found the body of a European chained to a stake and *roasted*—not burned—to death. I don't think the sight was for the good of the natives who fell into our hands.—I am, my dear Bruce, your aff. brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XIII

CAMP DELHI, 15th September [1857].

MY DEAR MOTHER,—As there is a *chance* still of a letter going by this mail, I write a few lines in hopes it may reach you. Since the 7th I have not had a moment that I could spend in that way, and even had I the time the means were wanting.

On the evening of the 7th, after having been warned to go with my men to construct advanced batteries, I wrote a few lines which I sealed and addressed to you in case I should have been knocked over, but as that did not occur I shall destroy it as soon as I get my traps collected and find the key of my desk.

Well, on the night of the 7th, my corps erected the first advanced battery, and, having worked all night under a very heavy fire of round-shot, grape, and musketry which flooded

## LETTERS [15TH SEPT.

many a good man, we got it finished and 10 guns at work at the city by daybreak.

From then to Sunday night I lived, or rather existed, in a constant state of hard work, with the additional excitement of shot and shell.

On Sunday night I came home to my tent and went to bed, in the confidence that I was to have a good night's sleep. At 3 I was awoke by an orderly with a letter telling me that I was to start immediately with 100 picked men of my corps to join the assault, and that the rest were to follow with the other officers. I did so, got safe in over the breach, and fought and worked all day in the heat until 6 at night, when I was relieved and sent home to rest.

By that time one-third of the city was our own, and the fighting still continues, and, from the immense extent of the city and the obstinacy with which every inch is contested, it will probably be 3 or 4 days before we have it all.

The less I say about the whole affair the better, as it could not be a pleasant subject to you, although to me, who had many dear and kind friends to revenge, it was so. I got off without a scratch, although my clothes were shot in more than one place; but I believe I did, and was acknowledged to have done, my duty. My escape can be only considered as a

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## CAWNPORE

most extraordinary one, as out of 14 engineers employed during the day, 10 were either killed or wounded, whilst I was there from the first until 6 at night.

With love to all, believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son, JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XIV

CAWNPORE, 8th February 1858.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—About a fortnight ago I wrote a letter to Bruce from Futtugurh, and had commenced one to you, when we got sudden orders to march for Cawnpore and Lucknow, and I had to lay my paper by and get the men ready.

Yesterday we arrived here, and to-morrow we go on, but as we are to be allowed only one tent per regiment and one servant each, I have so much to do making arrangements for the things we do leave behind, that I can only send you a very short letter.

I do not know whether it is the excitement of again getting something to do, or what, but I am now as well as ever I was, and I only hope that when the Lucknow affair is over I may not pay too heavy a price for the

## LETTERS

[8TH FEB.

exposure and excitement. I always wished to be at the settling it off.

We go at it under very different circumstances from Delhi, as we expect to have 20,000 men and no end of guns, whereas in Delhi, although at the last we had nominally 10,000, so many were sick and wounded that we could never muster 5000.

I went yesterday, after I came in, to see the house where the women and children were killed and the well into which they were thrown. The former is all knocked down, as it was in the way of the new fortifications, so I only saw the ruins. The latter is filled up, built over, and a neat little monument erected. I also went to see Gen. Wheeler's entrenchment—it is no shelter whatever; I rode over it on my old horse with ease, and could only wonder how it was held so long. I, like every one else, I believe, came away from these sights with feelings of revenge I never felt before.

As I will most probably have no chance of sending a letter for some time—not at least until Lucknow is altogether ours—I hope you will not be uneasy. The same Providence that guided me through the long, and tedious, and dangerous siege, and bloody assault of Delhi, where more than a third of our people were knocked over, can still protect me through

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## LUCKNOW

the comparatively easy affair we have now to meet. And consider that a *civilian*, as I have so long been, who goes through both, will be a sort of curiosity afterwards.

I am now very ill-mounted, as this work is murder to horseflesh, and I went out yesterday to try to buy. The only thing I saw at all like my weight was an Arab at the moderate price of £200. Before this row I could easily have bought him for £50. I could not make up my mind to pay such a price, so I go on with my old one, and will take my chance of *finding* one in Lucknow.

By the bye, I see the Government have become ashamed of themselves and are going to give us the Delhi prize-money after all, but they have so fearfully mismanaged it that my share will be barely £200. I hope better from Lucknow.

Give my love to the girls and their children, and best respects to John Mackenzie and Bruce; and believe me, my dear Mother, your ever aff.

JOHN.

## LETTER XV

CAMP BEFORE LUCKNOW,  
13th February 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I wrote to you from Futtighurh and to my Mother from Cawnpore,

## LETTERS [13<sup>TH</sup> FEB.

and to-day I got your letter of the 24th December enclosed in one of hers.

You send also a note of the troops that have come out. We have already the *immense number* of 4000 collected here, but we hope before the time the weather sets in hot enough to finish off all the fresh ones, to have 20,000 collected, and to be able to assault the place with some hopes of fairly polishing it off, and not, as was done at Delhi, fighting our way in at one end with some 3000 effective men, and allowing all the enemy to escape at the other end.

The fact is, my dear fellow, that months have been wasted—first, by sending the men out in sailing-vessels instead of steamers; again, by the want of arrangement in Calcutta for sending them up the country; and last, but not least, by the *funk* that induced the big-wigs in Calcutta to keep every man they could as long as they possibly could for the protection of their precious persons against nothing.

The consequence is, that although Sir Colin got this length once before, and relieved the garrison so far as to take away the women and sick, and also to leave them some assistance and provisions, he was unable either to keep the road open in his rear, or to relieve 8 unfortunate Europeans in the city, 4 of whom

were blown away from guns the day he left. The enemy had closed on his rear in the meantime, and on his return to Cawnpore he found Gen. Wyndham well licked and shut up in the entrenchment, and he, Sir Colin, had to attack the enemy, and, having thrashed them, follow them to Futtigurh and drive them over the river.

When there, he had not men for anything effectual; he certainly put the fort in order, and, after waiting there 3 weeks for ammunition from Agra and Delhi, most of which had come down from the Punjaub, he is now on his way here to besiege Lucknow, just as the weather is getting fearfully hot, and, after all, he will not have more than 20,000 men, of whom 5000 or 6000 have come down from the Punjaub, to attack a large and strong town, garrisoned by 30,000 regular troops, 600 guns, and no end of well-armed blackguards. However, we mean to take it,—we will, and that before long. As for us, we are by this time pretty well climate-proof, but the new arrivals will suffer terribly.

Sir Colin is, they say, in good spirits, but thinks he is ill-used in their not sending troops up from Calcutta. Sir John Lawrence has got up a plan of getting them from Bombay to Lahore, and then here, and, although the dis-



## LETTERS [13TH FEB.

tance is double, he expects to beat the Calcutta people in speed. He only started it the other day, so I cannot say how it will do.

I will write again as soon as we do anything.  
—Love to Helen and the young ones, and believe me, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

This reminds me of Delhi, guns going all day and all night too, but the enemy's batteries are at so prudent a distance that they hurt no one, and we do not even reply.

## LETTER XVI

CAMP BEFORE LUCKNOW,  
*13th February 1858.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your very welcome letter of the 24th December, enclosing one from Bruce, I have just received. As I only arrived here yesterday, you were rather premature in addressing to Lucknow, but to your doing so, I suspect, I owe the receipt of the letters. What put it into your head that I was here? for when your letter was written I had not the least idea myself that I had a chance of coming down.

We are encamped to the rear of Allumbagh

(the Garden of Allum), and have sent out working parties to-day to prepare materials for the siege. We are in an open plain, and the enemy have surrounded us with batteries from which they keep up lots of noise, but they have constructed them at so prudent a distance that they do us little or no harm.

We have some 4000 men here in all, but, to judge by what we saw on the road, we should have 20,000 and lots of guns shortly. I only hope they will let us into the place quickly, as the weather begins to get hot, and if we wait about outside we may expect half the men who are fresh from England to die off. They say the place is very strong. I have not had a look at it yet, as my old horse has had constant work for some time and has got a sore back. I therefore give him a rest to-day, but to-morrow I must go and have a look at the city walls from as near a point as may be prudent.

I am glad you saw some notice of my name in the papers. I had not done so myself, and thought it hardly fair, as I honestly think I did as much as my neighbours. Had Nicholson lived I think he would have mentioned it. Our men, I also think, got scarcely the notice they deserved, but it is generally so with irregular troops. Gen. Chamberlain said in his report to Sir John Lawrence that their courage amounted,

## LETTERS [13TH FEB.

in his opinion, to utter recklessness of life, and I was glad of that, as I have always been in front of them wherever they have gone.

I know who Mrs. Dewis is : her husband was a sergeant under Major Maxwell and made lots of money, but I did not know, although I may have met him. He would no doubt know my name well.

I shall try to find out Graham Lockhart, but as you do not mention his regiment I may not succeed. You, or Bruce, mentioned some Doctor he knew here, but I never keep letters now, on the chance of their falling into other hands, and I have lost the memorandum I made of his name. I think he belonged to the 3rd Bat. of Rifles.

I know there were some *small* rows in some of the Bombay regs., but they were kept very quiet. I did not, however, hear that it had gone the length of people running for their lives.

Did you see Harley Maxwell? You mention him in your letter. I met him some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years ago at a wedding, and breakfasted with him next morning.

I hope yet to see you all again, but am not at all sanguine about it. I have indeed a lot to tell—would a book pay?—‘Nine years’ residence in India, with twelve months in Cash-

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## LUCKNOW

mere and the hills, and a turn at almost everything going during the Rebellion of '57 and '58.'

I do not know whether they will give me a permanent commission or not. I fear my health will not suit it long, but will try. I am now about as well off as I was before the row took place, or rather better—that is to say, I may be worth £500 or £600. If I could get it up to £1500, I would be inclined to try some business out here, such as a paper mill, a distillery, or a farm, either of which would pay far better than Government employment does for an honest man here. We will see if Lucknow gives us any prize-money. Delhi will be very little. Indeed, it has been so fearfully mismanaged, some Bombay people, who had only half an hour's fighting altogether, share for Ensigns £905 each, whilst, as yet, for my 6 months I have not £200 or anything like it.—With love to all, I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XVII

CAMP NEAR LUCKNOW,  
*22nd February 1858.*

MY DEAR BRUCE,—My Mother's letter of the 16th Jany., enclosing one from you, I received

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[22ND FEB.

yesterday, being 1 month and 4 days, besides having gone round by Agra. It is the quickest I have ever had, and shows that the roads are pretty open and safe.

When I wrote to you a few days ago I think I said that we hoped to go in at Lucknow with 20,000 men before the hot weather. Alas, I was disappointed, as Sir Colin has had to return to Cawnpore to keep the communications open after almost reaching us, and now it is the Delhi affair over again but rather worse.

Our position is about this. We, about 5000 strong of all arms, are sitting down in front of a city defended by at the very least 100,000 men, armed and drilled, and most of whom are, or were at some former time, Sepoys of our own. This city we say we are attacking, whereas the fact is that we are almost daily attacked ourselves, and have to spend all the time not taken up in the repulse of the attacks in fortifying our position. We can do nothing against the city, which is getting stronger every day. Since Sir Colin relieved the Residency and got every one out, it is known that the enemy have dug a ditch 40 feet wide and 80 deep, round, at any rate, a considerable part of the town. With the assistance of the Punjaub and the Delhi force, Sir Colin can muster somewhere about 19,000 or 20,000 men of all ranks

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## LUCKNOW

and colours, of which it seems 15,000 are barely enough to keep open the communications in our rear, leaving us about 5000 men under Gen. Outram—and the hot weather fairly set in. I dined with Gen. O. the day before yesterday. He of course says little about it, but he seems to feel the delay of troops as much as any of us.

Yesterday (Sunday) we had a grand attack upon our camp, and I was out all day with our men. Of course the rebels were beaten back, but their constant attacks are tiresome.

Now I know you must think me a croaker, but my opinion is the same now as it was at first, viz. that every day this affair is allowed to go on makes it worse. What 5000 men could have done in May in Delhi with ease, 10,000 hardly succeeded in. in September, and 20,000 could scarcely do now in Lucknow, and if the row lasts much longer 50,000 will not do in 6 months' time. In India a row is like a snow-ball. In May the mutineers in Delhi were 6000 or 7000, in September something like 50,000, and now in Lucknow they are 100,000, rendered cautious by defeat, and increasing in numbers and strength every day. If Sir Colin gets up here soon, and we are favoured with a fortnight's moderate weather, I believe Lucknow will be ours; but if not, I think we must

## LETTERS

[22ND FEB.

sit here through the hot weather and rains as in Delhi and lose at least half our men, and *possibly* have to begin again to reconquer India.

I am very much obliged indeed for your kindness and trouble about the pistols, etc., and will accept your rifle with many thanks, and I have no doubt whatever but it will arrive in good time to kill its pandies. The pistols you propose are just what I intended, viz. the Navy or Holster and the small size; the large 5 lb. ones are only used, I believe, in cavalry, and one or two people who got them out by mistake have fitted gun-stocks to them, when they make a light and useful carbine. I did not mention to you one thing about the saddle, forgetting that what every one in India knows, may be new to people at home, viz. that a *very small horse* at home would be a full or rather large one here. I hope I shall get the things safe and soon, and shall have much pleasure in sending you a draft for the outlay.

You ask if I wish to continue in the army. I do most assuredly as long as the row lasts, and thereafter it must depend on what they can give, or feel inclined to give me. At a crisis like the present I consider it a man's duty to do what he can, and not think too much of his reward, but after it is all over I must consider first whether the state of my health will enable

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## LUCKNOW

me to continue at military duty ; 2nd, whether the rank they will give me in the army will, at my age, be worth having ; and 3rd, whether I could not, in the new state of things likely to arise in India, provide for my family better otherwise. I fear the answer to all these questions will be against the army, but I shall not give it up without trying my best for a fair position in it.

I am very glad indeed to hear that Helen is better. I hope both you and she may be blessed with health and every happiness, and the children likewise, although my ever seeing them is doubtful.

About the future, one thing seems clear to me, viz. that this country was created to make the fortune of a paper-maker if he could only get the machinery. What would a fair small plant cost to make foolscap and newspaper paper? The newest sort would be no object, labour is so cheap. I think by the time the war is over I might manage the money.—Love to all, and believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,  
JOHN CHALMERS.

I have not yet had an opportunity to send the sword, matchlock, etc., but hope to have soon.



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[22ND FEB.

### LETTER XVIII

CAMP BEFORE LUCKNOW,  
*22nd February 1858.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 16th January, with one from Bruce, I received last evening (Sunday), after coming in from a long day's fighting, or at least what is called so here. As usual on Sunday mornings when there is no parade, I was taking an extra sleep. About 7 the commanding officer came and told me to turn out quickly as the enemy were advancing in force in the direction of our camp (the Engineers'), which is more than a mile from Gen. Outram's, and in which the only fighting men are our regiment and two companies of Royal Sappers. Gen. Outram sent us 100 Punjaub Cavalry and 2 light guns to assist us, and out we went to meet them. They, I should say, came our way some 5000 strong—the main body attacking Gen. Outram's camp at the same time. We came within reach of them with the guns about 2 miles from our camp, had a shot or two, when they edged away and tried to get round us, but we were too quick and met them at every turn. This sort of thing lasted until about 3 o'clock, when they got tired of it and went back to the city,

but as another attack was expected we were under arms all night. We had only 2 men wounded, as, although at least 7 to 1, the enemy would not come near, and as our business was to protect our camp, we could not go out to them. This is the 3rd or 4th time they have annoyed us this way.

In writing to Bruce, who, I fear, thinks me a sad croaker, I forgot to mention that there was a Captain Campbell of the Engineers at Agra, but that I never met him. He lived in the fort, and as they would not let outsiders in on horseback, except on duty, and I, with some others, struck work and refused to walk, I saw none of the people there except old acquaintances. I may, however, on my return, have an opportunity, when I shall certainly call.

I am very much obliged to Uncle and Aunt Charles for the interest they take in me—also David and the Mortons. Remember me to all of them when you see or write to them.

I wish they would let Harriet Anne go to see you oftener. I have a pair of solid gold bracelets worth, by weight of gold, about £30, for her, and 3 cashmere shawls, *said* to be worth at least £100 altogether. If I get an opportunity I shall send them to you and write to her to go for them. I have been trying to

## LETTERS [22ND FEB.

pick up some pearls, and thought I had a splendid set, but found they were paste. I have a very fine Damascus sword and a revolver of native work and very old for Bruce, and will try to get something of the sort for John Mackenzie before I let Lucknow off. I ordered a set of photograph views of Agra for you and the girls, but the man who does them is very lazy and has not sent them yet. I hope he will, however. I have always regretted that I could not bring down my own instrument. My Cashmere journal and drawings are, I believe, at Goojeranwalla all safe. I wish I had an opportunity of having kept one during this war, but I could not easily have done so.

I am glad to hear from Bruce that Helen is better. Give my love to her and Eliza.

I am glad you like Major Maxwell. I only met him twice or thrice, and he was very civil, but I always rather avoided him.

A son of Doctor Duff's, who is a Doctor, was at our mess lately, and told me a lot of Edinburgh news. He seems to know the Cowans and Merchiston people.—I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

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## LUCKNOW

### LETTER XIX

CAMP NEAR LUCKNOW,  
28th February 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—As Sunday is an Adjutant's comparatively idle day, and as the mutineers seem inclined, for a wonder, to give us a day's rest, and as, moreover, I think from various signs my experience in such matters has led me to notice, that this may be the last day I will have to myself before the assault on Lucknow, I sit down to write you a few lines.

Our force is still almost as small as it was when I last wrote, but I hear Sir Colin is expected to-morrow with considerable re-inforcements. The fascines and gabions we have been making since we came here are now being loaded ready on carts, and packed in proper camel loads. Flying bridges have been constructed for crossing canals and ditches, and the men have been practised in the use of them, and to-day there is a grand consultation between Gen. Napier, the chief Eng., Col. Harnass, the Commander of Royal, and Capt'n. Taylor, the Commander of Bengal Engineers, and this morning I had instructions to take all the best men off the common guards and put on per-

## LETTERS [28TH FEB.

manent guards of the old and sickly men, so as to have all the rest ready for immediate work.

My opinion is that to-morrow or next day we will have to try an assault on the town, in which, if we succeed, good and well. We will lose *probably* many men and save a hot weather siege, by which we *must* lose many more.

If we fail in the assault, as we *ought* to do if the numbers against us *fight*, we must, as in Delhi, proceed by regular siege, which will last a short or a long time, according to the distance from the city at which we can get shelter enough to commence. My own impression, however, is that an assault will succeed.

As I have written to my Mother so lately, I shall not again do so until something is settled, as should she know that I was likely to be in another assault within a few days, and any delay should occur in the next letter, she would perhaps be uneasy about it, so I think you may as well not mention the receipt of this; and my only reason for writing it is that, should we assault, as I expect we shall, and should any footing be got (as at Delhi) in the city, I am almost certain to be here, as I was there, obliged to remain with my men to fortify the position so taken, and it might chance here, as it did

there, that by so remaining I might lose a post, and consequently you may be an extra fortnight without knowing for certain whether I am hit or not. Now, should any such delay actually occur, you knowing this, can explain it, and you can also say that although I hope and expect to be in the front of my men again as I was in Delhi—(I am glad, by the bye, to hear from my Mother that she saw my name as one of the five who led the first column of assault into the breach there, and which, not having myself seen in the newspapers, I feared was forgotten, and consequently I never mentioned in my letters)—yet the men are now much better disciplined than they were then, and will be much more under control; and as I always wear a beard and dress exactly the same as them, I am no object for a shot at a long distance, as many officers are who wear different colours from their men. Again, I have a sort of presentiment or conviction, or whatever you may call it, that I am not to go under this time—perhaps you may mentally quote the proverb about those who are born to be hanged with the variation of shot for drowned, but at present we keep the hanging pretty much for the other side.

Should anything happen to me, however, I am sure, my dear Bruce, that you will do what you can to console the old lady about it, and

tell her it was by far the best thing that could happen to the scamp of the family. Would it also be asking too much of you to kick up a row about my effects, pay, etc., in such a case, as although the amount will be small, it will be useful to my wife and daughter, and also the pension to which they will be entitled, but out of which our liberal Gov. will be sure to try to chisel them on some pretence or other, if no one kicks up a row about it.

I do not know what right I have to trouble one, who is personally a stranger, about such things, and I do not usually do so, but you must blame your own friendly letters and my Mother's constant praise of your kindness for it, and if you object to such trouble, you must so reform your habits as not to induce any one to trespass for the future. Although this letter would perhaps as well not be sent, or might better not have been written, as it might leave an impression on your mind that I have doubts of the work before me,—if so, I cannot blame you, although you would be much mistaken. I never thought of sending a letter before the assault of Delhi, nor should I now, but for you writing that my Mother had been uneasy then ; and as for doubt, every one knows that in such a business the chances are rather against than in favour of the few who lead the assault, but

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## LUCKNOW

I give you every assurance in my power that now I have looked what used to seem like the *certain* approach of death so often in the face as to think nothing whatever of the chance of it, or, if I think at all, it is as a pleasant excitement.

Give my best love to Helen and Eliza and their children for me, also to my Mother; and believe me, my dear Bruce, your sincere friend and brother,

JOHN CHALMERS.

As I am out of English stamps I must leave you to pay this postage. Some of the friends of officers here have been publishing their letters, and there is a row and threats of courts-martial. It is a shame for any one to do so, as a man writes to his family what is never intended for publication.

## LETTER XX

CAMP DILKOOSHIA, NEAR LUCKNOW,  
7th March 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—A few days ago I wrote to you from Camp Allumbagh (near Lucknow), and said I thought we were likely to have an assault soon, but I have been disappointed.



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[7TH MAR.

We packed up our traps and, as I expected, we started off, marched some 4 or 5 miles, partly towards and partly round the city, and then after a slight skirmish took this place and sat down in it, and here it seems likely we are to sit. I for one cannot see what Sir Colin is up to, but I suppose he has some plan or other of his own. All I can say is that he seems to be wasting valuable time.

Yesterday Gen. Outram crossed the river Goomtee with his division—5000 inftry., 2000 cavy., and 30 guns, and had a fight with the enemy, and I have no doubt the papers will say he won a battle. All I can say from what I saw and know is that with a force far superior to any we ever had in Delhi, he attacked an enclosure and *did not take* it, and that he had a Major of the 2nd D. Gds. killed and *did not* bring away his body. I cannot call this a victory, although the papers, I suppose, may try to do so. To-day Gen. O. again commenced to advance. The enemy came out and met him, and they had a fight. The enemy certainly went back to the city, and Gen. O. as certainly did not go forward. Neither do I call this much of a victory. The honest truth is that as yet we are overmatched, and the odds are rather increasing against us than improving, and must continue to do so with delay. We

have now something like 80,000 men of sorts, here and hereabouts, and I feel sure that if Sir Colin would make up his mind, as they did in Delhi at last, and as they should have done months before—to lose a good lot—he will go in and take the place, but every day he sits quietly here the enemy will increase both in numbers and in the strength of their position. Another thing is, that whilst the enemy have the whole produce of the country at their command, we have to draw all our supplies from Delhi and Agra at great expense, and with much labour and difficulty, and now it costs me more to keep my one horse than it did in the Punjaub to keep four. As I have said before, I dare say you think me a croaker, but you have not seen me often wrong since the row broke out.

I think now as I always thought, that to the mutineers we are culpably lenient. Witness the old king and his son, whom the natives say we are afraid to hang, and whose trial has already taken up weeks of valuable time. The evidence that the king ordered the murders is clear, and also that his son witnessed them. To say that the one is too old and the other too young to be responsible for their acts is simply '*rot*.' All orders are written entirely in the king's *own hand*, which would not be the case if he were

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[7TH MAR.

only a tool of others, and his son is 18, and is old enough to have already a family of his own, although I believe not married.

Again, even here in an enemy's country, when every man's hand is against us, who can find a weapon, we are ordered to be careful not to disgust the people by taking their grain and cattle even at a fair value. If they choose to sell to us (which, of course, they do not), good and well, we may buy, but we must pay their price ; and if they do not choose to sell we must go without.

I myself saw a scoundrel the other day bring a claim against a regiment for £10,000 damages done by their cattle to his crops during the march, and I believe he would have got compensation if I had not been called upon to interpret and threatened to hang him if he did not go off. I saw the damage myself. It certainly was not £10, and the scoundrel had the assurance to ask £10,000, although he and all his village had been in arms against us until we took possession of the district, when, of course, they had either to come in or leave their homes and land vacant, and they knew that they could safely do the former.

This is a beautiful place, and my tent is in an orchard of mango-trees, which give a beautiful shade. The river Goomtee, one of the

nicest and clearest I have seen in India, runs within 100 yards of it, and we bathe morning and evening. At first we used to take riflemen with us to keep back the enemy's pickets on the other bank, but since Gen. Outram has crossed we are safe in that direction; the only drawback is that the round-shot from the city sometimes comes in amongst our tents. I have seen 4 or 5 do so in an hour, but as yet they have hurt no one, so we do not trouble ourselves much about them. A round-shot at a long distance is a very harmless sort of thing, as to make it reach, the gun has to be so much elevated that the shot falls nearly straight down and does not roll. A shell in the same circumstances would do a lot of harm, but the pandies have very few of them here, and are saving of them.

This place is a park of the king's, with good houses and gardens all about. It is called Dilkoosha—or delight of the heart. We established our mess in the house next us, which is called Bibi-a-poorā, or Gift of the Lady, but Sir Colin, finding out that it was rather a nice place, turned us out and took possession himself, so we are in tents, and find it hot.

Close to this and in the same park is another garden, with summerhouse and statues and all sorts of things. I intend to try to take two

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of the marble tables back to the Punjaub for a present to a friend of mine, a Lieut. Pollard, who has the most handsome house I know in those parts, and who is one of the most decent fellows, and has a very kind and hospitable wife and four of the prettiest and nicest children I know.

Well, I have pretty well filled my paper with nonsense of one sort or another, and after all have said nothing, but having written that I expected an assault I had to tell you I was disappointed, and that I still am all sound, wind and limb, except my liver, which is sometimes troublesome.

I am glad to see the stir that is making at home against caste and in favour of missions here. I always thought the Gov. policy of discouraging Christians very wrong, but at the same time I thought that for Gov. to constantly declare to the Sepoys that we will not allow your prejudices to be interfered with, and for Gov. servants commanding regiments to preach to their men was wrong, as it tended to make the Sepoys think Gov. was trying to do in an underhand way what it feared to do openly. In my opinion the duty of a Christian Gov. is to afford every protection to men of every religion whatever, and to *exclude* no man from employment *because* he has not been able

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to think as we do, but at the same time it is, I think, their clear duty to give every fair play to Christians, and where the applicants for employment are otherwise on a par, I think they should certainly select the man whose faith gives the best security for his faithfulness.

Love to my Mother and Helen and the youngsters; and believe me, my dear Bruce,  
yours very sincerely, JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXI

CAMP BEFORE LUCKNOW,  
7th March 1858.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I have just written Bruce all the news that I can give, but to stick it all into the paper I cramped up my writing so that I hardly think he will manage to read it. As no doubt he will show you the letter, I do not know that anything remains to be said, only I thought you would probably like to have a letter to yourself.

By the bye, there is one thing that I forgot to mention to him, viz. that our regiment is now a regiment of the line and is the 24th Punjaub Infantry. I am rather proud of this,

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as when they were first enlisted it was so much doubted whether it would be possible to discipline them, that they made them pioneers and not a line regiment, and I take some credit to myself for showing the contrary to be the case.

So well are the authorities pleased with them that they have raised another regiment of the same sort of men.

I am now Adjutant of the 24th Reg. Punjaub Infantry, but I have heard a sort of a whisper that after Lucknow I will, if I continue to be anything, be Lieut. and 2nd in Command, but I am far from sanguine, as I shall never ask for anything, and I have always seen Sir John Lawrence very slow in advancing any one who will not ask loud enough. Indeed, I should not myself be at all surprised if, after the whole thing was over, they found out that it was irregular for me to be adjutant and got rid of me. But if they do, I will let them hear about it, I know.

I hope Helen is quite well by this time. I am myself much better than I could expect. I always am when I have work and excitement. It is afterwards that it tells on me.

This is a beautiful place. I do not wonder at the king wishing to keep it, but he would have done so much better by not kicking up a row, as his people must be beaten in the end,

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although at present we do not seem to have much to boast of.

Love to Helen and the children, and to John and Eliza when you write; and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXII

CAMP LUCKNOW,

*11th March 1858.*

MY DEAR BRUCE,—The day before yesterday, after a heavy day's pounding with the guns, a party was paraded to storm the school-house called *Le Martinère*, about half a mile from the city. As only two companies of our men went, I was not allowed to go with them, but saw the advance from a very short distance indeed.

The force consisted of part of the 42nd, part of the 92nd (Highlanders), the 4th Punjaub Infantry, and two companies of our men, with a reserve of H.M. 53rd and another regiment. They carried *Le Martinère* almost without opposition, and Major Wyld of the 4th Punj. and our two companies were ordered to occupy a village half-way between it and the city, but on no account to advance further that night.



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He went on with his men, our two companies and two companies of the 42nd High. who ran away from their regiment after him, and we saw or heard no more of him except his fire (as it was getting dark) until about 8 o'clock, when he sent up to say that he had entered and was holding a part of the city and wanted assistance.

The fact was that when the enemy retired from the village, two companies of his men, our two companies and the two companies of Highlanders, would not be kept back but followed them in.

Altogether it was a very quiet thing and done with little loss. Since then we are advancing slowly and expect to have all the city in 3 or 4 days. We have all our heavy guns in the part we have taken, and are knocking the rest of it about finely.

I was there all day yesterday, but have not been inside to-day. I had my usual luck myself whilst inside the city yesterday, but had a European sergeant, a native officer and 8 Sepoys hit—none killed.

As you may suppose, I am rather put out at not having been with the assault as I expected, but the whole thing was done by one of those lucky accidents that sometimes do happen. Had the enemy got in first and kept us out, it

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would have taken many days to destroy their fortifications; although only earthwork, they were' the strongest I have ever seen.—Love to Mother and Helen, and believe me, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXIII

CAMP BEFORE LUCKNOW,  
*12th March 1858.*

MY DEAR BRUCE.—I wrote you a few lines the day before yesterday mentioning that we had got a footing in the city and were steadily getting forward. Yesterday I went over to Gen. Outram's camp, who is attacking it from another side, and with whom are two of our companies. He had a goodish fight and took possession of one of the bridges across which the mutineers get their supplies, and got his guns to command the other. He also burned all the straggling houses outside the city on that side, and from which the enemy annoyed our troops. He killed some 500, losing 30 or 40 of his own men.

Yesterday Jung Bahadory came in with 10,000 Ghoorka troops. They are a rum looking little lot, few of them over 5 ft. 2, but are

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said to fight well, although their officers are very bad. They will be of use in preventing the escape of mutineers, but I fear not much else.

On my return here from Gen. Outram's camp, I found that we had advanced considerably from this side; indeed, got well into the middle of the city, but we had lost a good many. Captn. Hodson of the irregular cavalry, the best cavalry officer in this, or indeed, I think, any other service, is very dangerously—it is feared mortally—wounded, and what made it worse, he had no business there, as he only went to look on. Major Taylor of the Engineers, whom I first knew as a young lieut. and who has been one of my best friends since, is also wounded, and although not seriously, he has to lie up and is a great loss. As in reality he was the man who planned the taking of Delhi, so he has done everything here and pushed on in the face of the opposition of some very slow coaches we have. The immediate consequence of his wound was the giving up of a quarter of a mile of street we had got, as the Brigadier is said not to have felt himself justified in holding it at the risk of so much loss, without specific orders. Consequently we have to retake it at possibly a heavier loss than at first. I said in my last that Pandy did not fight so well here as in

Delhi, and I was so far correct that he would not face us outside and let us get in very softly, but he is standing his ground well now and doing us a lot of harm, far more than he did there after the first day's assault. In fact, but for our six heavy ship guns the sailors brought up (68 pounders). I do not know what we should do, but, of course, they soon shut up the Pandys 18 and 19 pounders.

The sailors are a queer set. Yesterday a lot of Pandies, who were in a house, would *not* be turned out, and were doing a lot of harm by firing from the windows, which were built up with the exception of loop-holes. Three or four sailors objected to this, and took a rather strange way of turning them out. They got up on the roof, made a hole, lit the fuzes of 3 or 4 8-inch shells they carried with them, dropped the shells into the room, and then looked down the hole they had made to see the effect. It was a wonder they escaped themselves, but they have extraordinary luck, and the result of their dodge seemed satisfactory, as the fire from that house was shut up for the day.

It is hard to say when we may have the whole place—not, I think, under a week, if they continue to dispute every foot this way, but they may try to bolt at any moment, although I think they can only escape by some

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gross mismanagement. We—I mean my regiment—have had 1 sergeant and 1 corporal wounded; 2 native officers wounded, and 2 Sepoys killed and 8 wounded.

Yesterday, when over at Gen: Outram's camp, I went to see the Badshaie Bagh, or Royal Garden. It is, I believe, mentioned in the *Arabian Nights* as one of the wonders of India, and although I visited it under rather disadvantageous circumstances, viz. a pretty steady shower of every sort of missile, from musket-bullets to 24 lb. shot, I had time to admire it very much.

From what I have seen Oude is by far the best province. and Lucknow by far the finest city, in India.

Our men are bringing out mirrors and pictures from the Begum's (Queen's) Palace that would astonish you, and I have just seen a bed-quilt of gold brocade that must be of great value. One Scikh has a pearl necklace valued £4000. He offered it for sale for £300. I wish I had seen it, but a native banker is the lucky purchaser.

We, of course, cannot plunder, but I hope to pick up a few curiosities by purchase, after everything is quiet, and I must have a horse at any price, as the old animal that carried me here is about done up.

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## LUCKNOW

With best love to Mother and Helen, believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

It is hardly fair to inflict letters on you when I have no overland stamps, but I think news from Lucknow direct *must* be of interest at present to every one—far more so than from Delhi, as then the mutiny was on a comparatively small scale.

## LETTER XXIV

LUCKNOW, 20th March 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Last night we fired the last shot at Lucknow, which is now entirely in our hands, and I have just returned from a long ride through the city. Days ago we had the palaces and all the entrenchments, but the Commander-in-Chief is rather a slow old gentleman, and objects to take any place until it is taken for him by some straggling party walking into it by mistake or something of that sort.

The rebel army have walked off with a loss of 3000 men killed and most of their guns taken from them, but they have not gone in a body, and I think are not likely to get together

## LETTERS [20TH MAR.

in any great force again. They must feel that they are completely beaten on ground of their own choosing, but we Punjaubees are very much disgusted at their getting away at all, and feel that with the force we had here during the last few days (30,000 or 35,000) they should have been, to use an Americanism, completely chewed up.

I have a short journal of the affair I intend to send you to-morrow or next day, but I am now very busy.

We hope to get back to the Punjaub at once, but our men have such lots of plunder, I do not know how we are to go.

I have a few good pearls and a shawl or two myself, and would have made a fortune if I could only have got a little leisure.

I did not know there was such a city in India. I have seen nothing to equal the Kaiser Bagh Palace anywhere.

Love to Mother. Tell her I am still unhurt and will write to her in a day or two, and that I think the row is now over as far as troops are concerned, although there will be lots of work for police. Love to Helen and the children, and believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXV

CAMP LUCKNOW,  
25th March 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Two or three days ago I wrote to you that we had taken Lucknow, and promised a copy of my journal as soon as I could get time to write it out, but that time has not come yet, as we are employed all day and every day in destroying fortifications and in hunting up parties of Pandies, and we come back too tired to write much.

I will, however, give you a short abstract, and you can see plenty of maps of Lucknow nowadays—at least I see the *Illustrated News* has one which will show you our position.

On the 2nd of March at 1.30 A.M. we left the camp we had occupied for some time between Allumbagh and the fort of Jellalabad, and marched to the Dilkoosha Park which the Commander-in-Chief had taken on the previous day with small loss. We arrived there at about 11, having to halt some hours on the way for orders. We were then encamped between the house called Bibi-a-poorā and the river, in a mango orchard which was, however, rather exposed to the enemies' round-shot from a battery at the



## LETTERS [25TH MAR.

corner of the La Martinière House next the river.

That evening I went with 30 men to find a ford in the river, and whilst there I was attacked by some of the enemies' skirmishers, but having 6 Lancaster rifles with us, we soon shut them up, although they had one Minie amongst them. A corporal of Royal Sappers knocked over the owner of it, and another took it up. He too went down, and a third also, so they seemed to think it an unsafe article to hold, and went off and left us.

The following two days were occupied in making two bridges of empty casks, which we succeeded in without loss, although under fire, and passed across Gen. Outram with 4000 men to occupy a position opposite the stone and iron bridges, and cut off supplies from that direction.

Up to the 9th we were engaged in preparing materials and putting up batteries to quiet those the enemy had in the Martinière, and on the afternoon of that day the attack was ordered. I saw besides artillery, the 42nd and 93rd Highlanders, the 53rd Queen's and the 4th Punj. Infy. and 200 of our men. There were also some other regiments, the numbers of which I did not notice. I could not get leave to go myself, but was allowed to

go part of the distance, viz. to the Dilkoosha House, whence I had a splendid view of the whole affair, and I never saw anything finer than the whole operation. The enemy retreated, but in fair order, and leaving some of their guns behind them. Between the La Martinière and the city to the right is a village, in which was a pretty strong Pandey force, and Major Wyld of the 4th Pun. Inf., with his regiment and 100 of our men, was ordered to clear it. Some 200 Highlanders got off with him, as by this time it was dark, and the next thing that we heard of him was that he was in the city, having followed up and got in with the enemy. The Commander-in-Chief was in a rage at Major W. not obeying orders, but it was too fortunate an affair to say much about, as he had, without loss, got a position inside the first row of fortifications which it would have cost much to take in a regular way.

From this beginning we got steadily on until we got Major Banks's house, and from it went on from house to house and from garden to garden until we got the Begum's house, where 522 of the enemy were killed, and we lost Major Hodson of the Punj. Cav. killed, and my friend Major Taylor of the Engs. wounded.

On the 11th we marched to the La Martinière to have our camp nearer the city, and on the

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12th took the Secundra Bagh and the house beyond the Begum's, and got round the end of the second line of fortifications which merely rested on some strong houses, as the Pandies seemed to think we would advance through the open streets and not through the houses as we did. On the 14th we marched close to the city, next to Major Banks's house where our camp now stands, and on the same day, in taking some houses next to the third and last line of entrenchments, a few Seikhs of Major Brazier's regiment again got inside with the enemy and held their ground, and virtually the city was at our command, as they were supported at once, the enemy driven out with considerable slaughter and a loss of upwards of 50 guns. I never saw anything so strong as the earthwork entrenchments, and it is shameful to think how ill so fine a force of Sepoys defended them—at least we think so after Delhi, but some of the Sebastopol people think otherwise and say they never saw heavier fire.

Since that day it has been a steady advance until the date of my last, at which time we had the whole city; but a beast of a Molvie or Mussulman preacher came back with a lot of natives and had a fight on the 22nd, when we lost Capt. Wale of the Punj. Horse killed;

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## LUCKNOW .

Major Wyld, 4th Punj. Infy., severely wounded, and his second in command killed. Major Brazier, Pun. Inf., and his second in command and adjutant, wounded; and Ensign Knowles, of our regiment, wounded. Our Seikhs, that is the 4th and Brazier's and ours, were at first beaten back but rallied and licked the Molvie, taking his 3 guns and a lot of horses, of which I have bought 3 very good ones for £25—rather a bargain as horses have been going lately, when you could not get anything fit to ride under £100 each. The day before yesterday some of the enemy gathered at a place some 10 miles off, and a force was sent off, when they ran at such a rate that they did not wait for a shot and left 15 guns behind them, but I, for one, think it unfortunate that so many of them have gone off at all, as I fear it has let us into another hot weather campaign—which I should not like.

Our men have lots of plunder, and some that I brought from the P'unjaub nine months ago, without a second shirt, are worth hundreds of pounds, I believe. Sir Colin says they are the greatest blackguards in the army, but we can stand the accusation, as our list of killed and wounded bears witness that they fought well for it.

I have myself picked up a few things by

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purchase from the men, but could not, of course, plunder anything, and if I can get leave home I have some pretty things in the way of valuable arms and a few cashmere shawls, pearls, etc. etc., but the value is not much altogether in that way after all. I have, however, a book that contains the life of the king, in poetry, and has about 100 of the finest native paintings in it I ever saw. I was offered £30 for it yesterday but refused. I had also a book with the photographs of the king and all the family. I gave £10 for it, but Mr. Russell, the *Times* correspondent, persuaded me to give it up to him.

I hope to get an opportunity to send some things home soon.

Give my love to Mother, Helen, and the bairns; and believe me, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXVI

CAMP WITH  
GENERAL WALPOLE'S COLUMN,  
NEAR LUCKNOW, 4th April 1858.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 8th Feby. I received two or three days ago, and am very glad to hear that Harriet Anne is to pay

you a visit. I wrote a pretty strong letter on the subject the other day, but it could not be received yet, and I am very glad indeed that the visit should be rather the result of a proper feeling on Sibyl's part than an order on mine.

I am very much obliged indeed by Bruce's attention to my wants in the pistol and saddle line. I shall have much pleasure in sending him a draft for the amount as soon as I know what it is, but you do not mention to whom he has sent the pistols in Bombay, and they will not be forwarded to me, I fear, until I have sent money for their carriage.

Our regiment has been divided into two wings for the present. Half of it is to stay here for the summer in garrison, and the other half—Headquarters wing—with which I go, is attached to Gen. Walpole's column, and will have to march about the country to keep it quiet, or perhaps may move to Bareilly to take the city. It is now fearfully hot in tents, and although, as usual, when I have lots to do, I am in excellent health, I really dread another summer under canvas for its probable effects on my constitution, which is rather the worse for wear as it is.

Many thanks for the offers of my friends in my favour. I only wish I knew what they could do, but do not clearly see how they

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can do anything. I know a statement of my services has gone home with a pretty strong recommendation, but I expect the Gov. will think they do enough if they confirm my Ensigncy and Adjutancy. If so, I shall most certainly not remain with them, as to be an ensign of my age at the *close* of a war, would hold out no prospect of advancement whatever.

If they *confirm* my ensigncy and adjutancy from the time I was appointed, and as a reward for service promote me to Licut. and second in command, I shall hold on, as in that case I might eventually hope to retire as a Captain, which the other way would hardly be within the range of possibility.

In other respects this affair has done me a great deal of good. I have drawn good pay and allowances, and, in spite of the high prices we have had to pay for everything, have saved money, and I think, nay, I am almost sure, that when I return to the Punjaub I shall be worth £2000 to £2500 at the least. and that is, in this country, an ample capital to commence more than one sort of business on. My hobby has always been, ever since I came to the country, a tea-plantation, and with that capital and moderate industry I think I should do well.

I am now well mounted for the first time

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since I left the Punjaub, having picked up some good horses here at moderate prices.

With love to Helen and the children, and respects to Bruce, I am, my dear Mother,  
your aff. son,

JOHN.

LETTER XXVII

PHILIBEET, 7th Sept. 1858.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Your letter and my Mother's of the 24th July I received here on the 1st. I wrote to my Mother yesterday, and I now write to you that they may go to Bombay by different posts in hopes that one, if not both, may reach safely, as the mails are still sometimes cut off, although not so often as they were 4 or 5 months ago.

I am particularly anxious about these reaching, as I see I am put down in the newspapers by some fool, who would have been better minding his own business, as wounded, and as that may find its way by telegraph, my Mother may be anxious. I for that very reason kept my name out of the official returns, as it was a mere scratch of a sword, that I did not require even to have dressed; thanks to the Colts revolver—the largest—I settled my friend before he became too troublesome. I have not



## LETTERS

[7th SEPT.

heard of the saddle yet, but no doubt it will come safe, and it was I who was *behind the age*, not you that were wrong in the kind. I find that from your description it is strictly correct according to what the mounted officers of all the regiments *fresh from home* use. I have now two first-rate chargers, but one, a sweet, pretty Arab, is not my own, but as good as mine, as his master can't ride him and uses a steady old horse I used to ride, and gives him to me. He won't sell him, though. He refused £160. The other, a powerful and splendid bay, I plundered at Lucknow. What you say about old acquaintances is true according to English notions, but not here, else how is it that I can't get any *permanent* employment, even an ensigncy? Everything is local, temporary, and officiating, and must remain so until things change. I think Maxwell could scarcely fairly task me with not being on easier terms with him. As far as I recollect, we met at a wedding of a daughter of a friend of his to a friend of mine. He asked me and the person with whom I was on a visit to breakfast next morning. I went, and I don't recollect meeting him since, as I lived some 30 miles away, and went on sick-leave soon after.

I send you a sketch of two fights we have had, viz. on the 29th and 30th of August,



and will try to describe them to you, but I do not know anything more difficult than to convey a decent idea of a fight to one who has not seen the ground himself. I also send the extract from the papers—it is a shame for fellows to send such stuff: only 2 officers were wounded out of 7, at least worth mentioning, and the major, Larkins, was *not there at all*. Brigadier Coke of the 1st Punj. Infy., one of the best soldiers in India, says it was the *best* thing of the whole war, and the despatch says, ‘The advance of the skirmishers of the 24th P. I., led by Ensign Chalmers, was the admiration of all concerned.’ I can assure you I have had lots of congratulations. It is the first time, so far as I know, that a camp, defended by guns in position, has been carried and the guns taken by a force half the strength without guns—neither had we any Europeans. Enough of this, so here goes for description.

About three weeks ago a rebel force established themselves on the hill shown at the bottom of the sketch, called Sirpoorea. They were about 700 infantry, 300 cavy., and had 4 guns, 2 brass 9-pounders, one 4-pounder, and a small iron one. In front they had the lake and morass shown, and in their rear they had a dense forest to retreat to. It reaches for some 20 miles to the foot of the hills.

## LETTERS [7TH SEPT.

Their camp was on a sort of double hill with two small clumps of trees, and was very well selected. They began to plunder the country, murder the police, and, in short, play old Harry with everything and everybody.

We did not, of course, like the idea of such a nest of rascals within 14 miles of us, and petitioned the great and gallant General Walpole to let us go at them, but he refused; said they could not be licked without guns and Europeans, that he had neither to spare, and, in short, that he would put the first man that suggested such a thing under arrest.

Well, we changed our ground and got Mr. Lowe the magistrate to request that a party might accompany him as far as

[A sheet of this letter is here missing, which no doubt describes the first day's fighting. The next sheet proceeds as follows:—]

We returned as quick as we could and recommenced work, finishing the entrenchment before night.

In the afternoon Major Sam Browne, 2nd Punj. Cav., joined us with 130 sabres more of his regiment. 170 of the 17th P. I., and 100

Ghoorkas of the new Kemaon levy, all mere boys. None of the 270 infantry had ever been under fire.

About half-past 10, having done my work, I got to bed, such as it was, in my wet clothes (having brought no change), and about 12 Sam Browne came to my bedside and told me that, having got guides, he intended to attack the camp in the rear about daylight, and for that purpose would march at 2 A.M.; that he had heard such an account of the conduct of my men on the previous day from both Craigie, his second in command, and Lowe the magistrate, that he intended to divide them—50 for the advance and 50 more for the supports, and to keep the other infantry in reserve.

I, of course, thanked him, and set about my arrangements. As my men had been very tired I did not call them as long as I could help it, but we got away in good time and marched round by the dotted line. When we got out of the wood in rear of the camp and drew up as shown, we found that the enemy were aware of our coming and were drawn up to meet us. They had 4 guns, 300 cavalry, and 700 infantry, according to the accounts of both spies and prisoners. We were 800 yards from them and not a bush lay between to shelter us from their shot.

First came my 50 men in skirmishing order, then 50 yards behind them 50 more of the same as supports; 150 yards behind the supports came the reserve, and we had a troop of cavalry on each flank and a squadron in rear to be ready to pursue the enemy if beaten. We got round-shot from the guns as we fell in, and I told my men not to lose time firing their muskets, but to push on and take the guns at once. Sam Browne asked me if I was ready. 'Yes.' 'Then give your own orders, and don't hurry your men.' 'Shoulder arms! Slope arms!' (that is to carry them sloped over the shoulder, the bayonettes having been previously fixed and the pieces loaded) 'Quick march!' and off we went at a steady pace, 3 miles an hour, and dressed in line as if on parade, in the face of all the shot, grape, and musketry they could give us, without answering a shot. This coolness seemed regularly to confuse them, and they fired badly. When at 80 yards I said 'Double!' (to run), and shouted, and in 20 seconds the guns had changed hands, the gunners were dead or dying, and lots of the infantry the same, but the cavalry were off—off and away towards the wood. Our cavalry to the right suffered severely from a 4-pound gun at *E*, which, as they advanced, was moved to *F*, where, with the little iron one, it was taken.

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We took 4 guns, 3 elephants, 40 or 50 bullocks, as many horses, and killed at least 300 of the enemy, losing on our part 2 killed and 30 wounded. Poor Browne lost

[The remainder of this letter is also unfortunately missing.]

## LETTER XXVIII

[The following letter from Colonel John Clarke refers to the same subject as the previous letter.]

JHABPHANPORE, Nov. 29 [1858].

MY DEAR CHALMERS,—I hope you have recovered from the wound in the foot, and that your health is generally *fair*, for sound I never can think it will be till you sniff the briny. I am going home sick. I have been very ill, but am now convalescent.

I cannot leave the country without congratulating your p. p. comrades on what I must think one of the most brilliant feats of arms, if not the most so, that has distinguished the Army. It has not been half appreciated (so far as I can see), and for *that* your General

## LETTERS [12TH JULY

and Brig. are responsible. It was not to be supposed that you wounded men could write despatches beyond necessity.

Directly I saw the account (and I saw only a good private one) I wrote to Sir John Lawrence urging your claims to an Unattached Company in H.M.'s service on him, but he took no notice of it. I am going off as soon as Wm. Forbes arrives to relieve me. My dear Chalmers, I wish you luck. Keep your temper, my boy; excuse a *pater*, and I still hope to see you where you ought to be. I wish I had you as a Civil Asst. I don't know if I shall be able to return to India, but I earnestly hope so, for a year or two's work I hope I may have in me.—Yours very truly, J. CLARKE.

If you have occasion to write to me, you must address any time before end of Decr., care of Col. H. P. Barm, in Calcutta.

## LETTER XXIX

SHUMSHABAD, NEAR ATTOCK,  
12th July 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 16th May I received here about a week ago, and I



1859]

## SHUMSHABAD

was very glad to hear that you all get on well.

I wrote you some time ago that I had sent you some 15 or 16 wool and silk scarves, and requesting you to distribute them. They reached Elliot safely nearly a month ago, and are now no doubt on the sea. Mrs. Pollard and her little consignment must have reached England ere this. Pollard dined and stopped the night with me last week.

I think I mentioned, when in Umritsar, that on an Easter Tuesday morning I had gone to the baptism of some 6 or 7 native converts. It took place in a small chapel attached to the Church Mission Orphan School, and besides myself, the Judge, his deputy and his assistant, and two or three other influential people attended. Now, as Indian newspapers always interfere with what does not concern them, all our names were published in the next *Lahore Chronicle*. Lord Canning saw it, and immediately wrote to Sir R. Montgomerie, the Lieut.-Governor, to know under what circumstances Government Officers could have done such a thing, and to call upon us for explanation. Sir R. Montgomerie never did so, but I suppose wrote his own sentiments, which shut up the matter for the time.

The other day, however, Lord Canning found

## LETTERS [12TH JULY

out that I was in the habit of reading the Church service in Hindoostanee on Sundays, and that 12 men, 3 women, and 4 children had been baptized, and acted as good and consistent Christians; also that many more attended service and were anxious for baptism; also that I had a school in which 35 men were learning to read and write, and that some of them could read the Scripture fluently.

These men, as I have before written to you, were once all thieves and robbers, and most people would have thought the person who had not only made soldiers of them—and such soldiers as you have seen by my letters they have proved—but also civilised and taught them, deserved some credit. Not so Lord C. He sent a circular to all Punjaub regiments, stating that a strong tendency to embrace the Christian religion had manifested itself in the 24th P. I., and prohibiting all commissioned officers from interfering in this way. I never mentioned this to any one, so I don't know where the *Lahore Chronicle* got the facts, but it gives a very fair statement of all that I did in the matter, so of that I can't complain, but as Lord Canning will be sure to see the article it will ruin my prospects, I fear. Of one thing, however, I am proud, viz. that if I have to leave,

1859]

## SHUMSHABAD

I will leave him the *very best regiment* in the service.

You once asked why my men did not petition for me to command. That would be contrary to all rule, and a man who *makes* people work and do their duty, although liked and respected, is not likely to be petitioned for.

Well, when we saw the article in the paper and the order, both Major Hovenden and myself sent in a resignation of our appointments, but Sir Robert Montgomerie refused them, saying that we must wait to see what Lord C. will do next, and that he can't go against the Queen's proclamation.

I hope to start to Cashmere this day month, and to send Bruce some horns and skins. By the bye, Lieut. Stevenson of our corps is in Cashmere now, and has caught the man who robbed me, but has not found the property, although he hopes to do so.—Love to all, and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

With the jail business I had nothing to do, but I hear that some of the best magistrates applied for permission.

## LETTERS

[12TH AUG.

### LETTER XXX

SHUMSHABAD, NEAR ATTOCK,  
12th Aug. 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 1st July I received yesterday, enclosing one from Helen. I suppose Bruce is off grouse-shooting somewhere to-day, 12th Aug. I have not yet got my leave for Cashmere, owing, I *believe*, to a \*something very like mutiny—I hardly know what to call it now—in the 7th Royal Welsh Fuzileers in Jhelum. Really these are strange times. First, Lord Canning let off one native regiment who mutinied. This was followed by a mutiny of the whole native army, who were licked *in spite* of him and his orders, but forgiven by him as soon as beaten. The Company's European troops then mutinied, and were not only let off, but are to be furnished by Lord C. with a free passage to England. Now the Queen's regiments, finding the process so pleasant and safe, seem to be following suit, and if Lord C. is not removed soon we shan't have a soldier of any sort in India in 12 months, in my opinion. You, Helen, and Eliza seem to take some little interest in my men, so I send you two extracts from newspapers, and one from a letter

about it, and will tell you the whole affair from the beginning.

When the mutiny commenced there was in the Punjaub a race called Muzbee Seikhs, who held no land or respectable employment, who were held so low that they were not *allowed* to draw water from a well for fear of defiling it, or to wear white or clean clothes for fear of being mistaken for respectable people. If they left their village even for a few hours, they had to leave their names both at the police office of the place they left and that to which they went.

The natural result was that they lived by theft, murder, and highway robbery in a general way, and were considered at the outbreak of the mutiny as a highly dangerous class. Mr. (now Sir R.) Montgomerie thought, as they were a strong, bold race, that it would be a good plan to make soldiers of them, and so take them away from the Punjaub and keep them always under the power of a large army. Sir John Lawrence thought the experiment dangerous, but eventually agreed. Never setting a very high value on my life, I volunteered to be their Adjutant, and fortunately, having a commanding officer who was always sick and left me a great deal to myself, I had a fair chance to follow my own way. I have made them a

## LETTERS

[12TH AUG.

regiment. How they have fought you have seen, both in orders and letters of superior officers, but this was not enough for me. I aimed to raise them socially and physically, and had very uphill work from their dirty habits. I formerly had sometimes 90 men in hospital. Now I have 34 men who attend school regularly—scarcely ever a punishment of any kind; but when a man does offend, he does catch it, no matter who he is. They are splendidly drilled. Their barracks, houses, and lines (streets of houses) are notoriously the neatest and cleanest in India; their clothes, when off duty, the most snowy white possible. They bathe regularly, are respectful and intelligent in manner. I have seen in the hot season only 5 men in hospital, and, in fact, I consider that these thieves and robbers are reclaimed; but, *unfortunately*, as the *Delhi Gazette* says, ‘in the operation some few of them got some little knowledge of the Christian religion.’ I, instead of retarding the movement, gave them encouragement and the little poor instruction it was in my power to give, and the result was, in three or four months a little church of 24 *baptized* Christians—16 men, 3 women, and 5 children—and about 70 or 80 other men who attended regularly but had not been baptized. When Capt. Hovenden joined he reported the

case, as you will see in the *Delhi Gazette*, but then there were not so many. I thought I had done what was right. I had done my best to improve and civilise my men, and *publicly* I am in the Government letter *acquitted*, but I get a *private* letter explanatory of the public one, of which I enclose an extract, and in which I am forbidden to attend the baptism of any more men, or even to attend a service in the native language — after having regularly *read* the morning and evening prayers and lessons for 3 or 4 months. What must the Christian men think of this prohibition by Gov., still less the heathen who wavered and were half-inclined to be Christians—for recollect, I was never charged with *preaching* or using *any means to convert*. I merely read the prayers of the Church of England to those who were already Christians, and did not *turn out* those who came and were not. I own I am at a loss what is my duty-- I am at a very great loss. My leave will avert the decision for 2 months or more, but I am not clear what to do then, but hope I will act according to what is right. You will see from all this why Lord Canning has taken no notice of Lord Belhaven's letter. I am a black-sheep and must not be allowed to get on. Well, never mind; as they are getting on themselves at present, they will soon wish they had not

## LETTERS [12TH AUG.

only the 24th P. I., but many other regiments Christians.

Show this letter to the girls, for as this matter, in spite of all I could do, has become public, and many papers ridicule me and some few condemn, I should like them to know the true state of the case.

I suppose you have got the scarves by this time, and from Cashmere I will send the girls cloaks like that I sent Harriet, and some skins and horns to Bruce. I have a very good Damascus sword for David. It was taken at Lucknow, but is not so handsomely mounted as those I sent Bruce. It is, however, equally *good* as a blade. I hope the things Mrs. Pollard took arrived in good order. My only fear is that the day they were packed rained, and as it had rained for a week before, the air was *very damp*, and living in a tent I could not put on a fire.

I want a commission executed very much indeed. I would ask Mrs. Pollard, who I think would possibly be persuaded (knowing me) to be honest and send a bill, but she is no judge, and I don't like to ask Bruce, as he would not do so in the case of the rifle, saddle, and pistols, which were too valuable a present for me to receive. Perhaps, however, you could manage that he should do it and send a note of the cost.



I have no watch that will go and stand my work. The flimsy French things they get here don't last me a month. I want a *very good, strong*, gold watch (silver turns black in this climate), *not too* clumsy, but one that will stand work, and that won't stop if I carry it when sitting on a kicking horse; also a good, plain, but strong curb chain, to fasten to a button-hole for additional security. It should be made by Dent or M'Cabe, or some good maker who is in the habit of making for India; and is a sort of thing that I would pay any reasonable price to have *good*, for if a watch once goes wrong here, you must send it back to England to be mended, so a flimsy one is no use. It should be insured and sent to the care of Elliot. If you can do this in such a way as to avoid Bruce doing as he did before, I should be very glad, as a watch that will keep time is absolutely necessary where clocks are unknown. The former part of my letter is public, but this is private, all this sheet. So with love to Helen, and many thanks for her letter which I may answer, I hope, from Cashmere, and love to Eliza, and respects to Mackenzie and Bruce and all the rest of the people, I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHAMBERS.

I hate to write an egotistical letter like this,

## LETTERS

[9TH OCT.

but I wish to let you all know that whatever happens about this matter of going to church, I have not been to blame.

## LETTER XXXI

CASHMERE, 9th Oct. 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—As I fear you may be anxious, I write a few lines to say that I am here now and return to the plains in a few days, but have been far from well since I came up here. Nothing dangerous, you know, but my liver very much out of order.

I almost think Colonel Clarke was right in thinking nothing but a sea voyage would set me up all right again, but we will see. I suppose this is only the reaction after all the excitement I have had.

I am glad the box arrived all right. I heard from Mrs. Pollard that she had to leave it with Grindlay, as there was a reference required as to the amount of duty to be levied, but it would be very safe with him.

The day I packed the things was very wet indeed, and I was afraid some of them would be spoiled.

1859]

## SHUMSHABAD

I suppose the other parcel has reached ere this. I am amused at the valuation of the things. The worst shawl of the lot was worth more pounds than Eliza's polka jacket cost half-crowns.—Love to all, and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

I have written for Mrs. Pollard's address, as I have forgotten it. It is about Haverfordwest.

## LETTER XXXII

SHUMSHABAD, 31st October 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I arrived here yesterday, and although almost afraid that I am a day too late for the mail, write a few lines on chance.

I received your letter of Sept. 17th and am glad the scarves arrived safe, and hope they will be liked by those who are to wear them. I was very unwell all the time I was in Cashmere, but, strange to say, am all right now I have returned to the plains.

I have 4 pairs of good stags' horns for Bruce—I think considerably larger than Scotch ones—one of 12 tines, 2 of 11 tines each head, and

LETTERS. [31ST OCT.

one of 10 tines. I will send him the measurement, and if they *are* larger than Scotch ones, I will send them. I have a few pints of good bear's grease for the girls, but no skin, as the only bear I shot was a mangy brute.

I will write to both you and Bruce next mail, and you will probably get it with this, as this is too late.

When I returned from leave I found all the three other officers of the regiment under arrest and a stranger in command. It is unfortunate that I was on leave, as I don't *think* I should have been in any way mixed in the row, had I been there, but it can't be helped. Major Hovenden and the Adjutant, I *think*, are all safe, but the junior officer must lose his commission, unless decided on as mad, which I *always* thought him.—I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

*P.S.*—I don't exactly know where Mrs. Pollard is at present, as she has been visiting about, and Pollard himself is now away on a tour with the General ; but Mrs. Pollard, care of Mrs. Heathcote Wake, Romsey, Hampshire, will find her out. I will write to David soon.

## LETTER XXXIII

SHUMSHABAD, 15th Nov. 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of 1st October, with enclosure from Bruce and Helen, I received about a week ago, but you did not put Hugh's letter into it as you promised.

I am glad you noticed my promotion. I think it is *almost* the only one, if not the only one, so worded, but as I have said (I think) before, butter is all very well but solid bread is better, and somehow I don't get much of that as yet. I *am* trying to sell that jewel and hope to do so soon, but it is not easy to do anything when your duties tie you down to such a place as this, which, although pleasant enough, is as much out of the world as any place in the interior of Africa.

I expect to start for Peshawur the day after to-morrow, and shall spend a few days with Pollard. An order has come out that every one holding staff appointments must pass an examination in the native languages before the 20th or lose their allowances. This is an economical dodge which, I fear, will cost me half my income, as, although my acquirements in that way have

## LETTERS [15TH NOV.

served me to discipline a regiment and to command it through a good part of the campaign, I was too old when I began ever to learn correctly so difficult a language, and I fear my spelling in it will not be considered up to the mark. One part of the examination is to turn a page of an English book into Hindoostanee in two different characters, and three errors of either spelling or grammar cuts you out. This is no hardship to those who go to Addiscombe at 15 or 16 and learn little else, and then come out here about 18 or 19 and keep it up; but for one who was 30 before he had ever had to speak a word and 35 before he had tried to write one, I fear it is *impossible*. My own opinion is that the whole thing is a *dodge* to get rid of outsiders who have risen through the mutiny to situations coveted by the regular parties. As to the men who became Christians, there are now 25 baptized Christians in this corps—men, women, and children—and I am neither allowed to read to them nor to speak to them on religion. We had a school with from 35 to 40 regular scholars, but as the only English schoolbooks were those of the missionary society, my attending the school to teach or even to visit it has been considered an interference with the religion of the people, and I have been forbidden to do so.

Now there is a congregation of 25 professing

Christians baptized, and, although ignorant, anxious for instruction, but no one can give them any, as the possibility of their keeping a clergyman is, of course, out of the question. Even if they did, he would not be allowed to enter the lines of the regiment, but would have to live out of the lines and only see those who came to him at his own house.

I don't know how long this can go on, but it makes me sick to think of it, and to make any complaint or remonstrance would not only ruin me, but by removing me they would put it out of my power to do even the very little good I can now do, and these poor wretches would be left without one friend. I don't wonder that officers don't try to make their men Christians. I feel that I have done them every harm in a worldly point of view by doing so myself.

Otherwise the regiment is getting on well. They are very well drilled and we have the best native band but two that I have seen. I hear a lot of Punjaub troops are to go to China, but we are too far from the sea to be called on. I expect, and no doubt they will send regiments there which have seen less service than ours, so as to give them a chance of doing something. I should like to go very well, both because it is a country I should like to see and because it would give me, I *think*, some promotion. I

## LETTERS [15TH NOV.

*know* if we went, and if by any chance I could get command of the corps in an action, I could bring both them and myself into notice. The difficulty is to get the chance to command in anything. Brig. Troup at Delhi is a brother of Brig. Colin Troup at Moultan—my friend. I have never seen him. The brothers came out together 40 years ago and are now both Brigadiers.

With love to all, I am, my dear Mother,  
your aff. son, JOHN CHALMERS.

I have 4 *quart* bottles of *genuine bear's grease* of my own shooting. Would the girls like it for their bairns' heads?

## LETTER XXXIV

SHUMSHABAD, 15th Nov. 1859.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Your letter and Helen's, of the 1st October, I received enclosed in one from my Mother, and I am glad Helen is pleased with the scarfs.

My Mother seems to think I am likely to go to China and be eaten up by the ferocious inhabitants thereof, but I fear no such luck is in store for me as to have the chance of doing anything to push myself on.



I have kept this letter back till the last moment, as I expected that we would have had orders to-day to march for the frontier. A border tribe, the Wuzeerees, have kicked up a row and murdered a Capt. Meecham, who was travelling on the road from Bunnoo to Kohat, which runs near their country. A force of 10,000 men with a lot of guns are to go up in a day or two with a civil request that the murderers—who are known—may be given up, and as we do things differently in the Punjaub from Lord Canning's system, and the scoundrels know it too, I have no doubt the tribe (although they can muster 50,000 matchlock-men) will think fit to comply with the request. I thought we should have been called on, but to-day's post has brought us no order to that effect. I am rather sorry as, although these border rows are not considered in the light of regular war, and even success gives neither advantage nor honour, yet I should have seen a new and strange country and a new style of hill warfare.

I am now very unsettled, and although I have not written to my Mother about it, will tell you the whole yarn.

I was and am second in command of this regiment: Major Hovenden commanded; Ensign Stevens (who rose from the ranks) is

adjutant; and a Lieut. Stevenson did duty as supernumerary. Now Lieut. Stevenson is a man with many grievances, and, I fear, not much principle. His first grievance was that I, who was an outsider, got the appointment of second in command, and his next that Ens. Stevens, principally through my recommendation, got the adjutancy. Well, he tried to set Hovenden up against me, but failed. He tried to get me into a quarrel more than once after dinner, but, having the advantage of a cool head,<sup>1</sup> he failed in this also, and took a hatred against Hovenden as well as against me and Stevens. He could not understand that he was not recommended for promotion simply because he was unfit for it.

Whilst I was in Cashmere he tried more than once to get Hovenden into a quarrel but failed, until one evening when there were visitors at the mess, when he went into a very improper style of conversation, and Hovenden checked him for it. He repeated the offence in a worse form, and Hovenden told him to stop that style of thing, and he says called him impertinent. He ordered Hovenden under arrest, and subsequently Stevens, the Adj., also. Now there is a law by which an inferior can put a superior

<sup>1</sup> [It is no doubt meant that this advantage lay with the writer.]

under arrest, but only to prevent a duel or stop a quarrel likely to lead to one. but Hovenden did not know the regulation well, and, to prevent a row, submitted.

Next day, another officer was sent here to take command, and Stevenson himself was put under arrest. He will lose his commission, I think, but the worst of it is that the General is a great enemy of Hovenden's, and has recommended his removal from the regiment on the ground that if he had kept up his authority sufficiently, such a thing could not have happened.

On my return, then, from Cashmere, I found *all* the officers of the corps under arrest and a stranger in command. I have applied for the command myself until the case is settled, and will probably get an answer in 10 days, and if Hovenden has to go, although I can hardly think such an injustice possible, I shall apply for the *permanent* command. If I get it (which without interest is, I fear, impossible) I must hold on for a year or two at any risk before I go home, so as to get a *hold* on the appointment, but if any one else is appointed to supersede me, as I am convinced will be the case, I shall at once go in for leave to England on medical certificate, and you may then see me in July next. This is how the thing stands

## LETTERS [29TH NOV.

at present, but although I feel the command to be my right, my prospect of it is, I fear, very poor indeed. Interest is everything now in India.

If Hovenden is not kicked out I shall be ruled in going home by how I feel about March. If he stays, my going or not won't affect my interests, as he will look after them.

I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,  
JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXXV

SHUMSHADAD, 29th November 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Since I last wrote to you I have spent 10 days in Peshawur, where I had very good health and enjoyed myself very much, although I did not succeed in passing the examination. They are going to give us another chance in April next, and I shall try hard to study in the meantime, but fear the result must be the same.

I stayed with Capt. Bartlett, the Cantonment Magistrate, and Capt. Iremonger, the Assist. Adjutant-General, who live together, and they were very kind to me. I had invitations to dinner every day, and as I have seen

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## SHUMSHABAD

no civilised society and hardly one lady for the last three years, except the short time I was in Umritzar, where there were two, I required to visit a tailor for a suit of decent plain clothes and polish up my ordinary slovenly habits not a little. One point, however, I could not succeed in, viz. gloves. I never was very fond of them, and after so many years without them, I *could* not stand it.

Capt. Bartlett goes home in April or May after 18 years in India. When will my turn come?

On my return I had a letter from Sally Jones, dated 12th Oct. It is a mail newer than any from you or Sibyl. Sally is very well pleased with the scarfs, and says they are generally admired in her neighbourhood.

I shall not write to Bruce this mail, as I have no news for him. Everything is exactly as it was when I last wrote, but there is sure to be a vacancy in this regiment for a commander in March, and I wish I could see my way clear to make interest for it. The appointment I would be sure of if it lay with the Punjaub Government, but Lord Canning and Lord Clyde will be the people. With the former Lord Belhaven *might* have influence; Sir Barnes Peacock certainly would. With the latter I must see what Brigadier Troup can do for me. I know

## LETTERS

[2ND DEC.

he will do what he can, but I much fear somebody will have a brother or first cousin or some friend who would like the appointment, and if so, I shall certainly be much disgusted and disheartened.

Give my love to Eliza, Helen, and the bairns, and best respects to Bruce and Mackenzie. Kindly remember me to Uncle Charles, Aunt, David, and all the family. By the bye, do you ever see James Cowan, and does he recollect me? He and I used to be rather good friends. —I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

I am just sending off a letter to-day, the result of which I hope will be the sale of my jewels.

## LETTER XXXVI

SHUMSHABAD, 2nd December 1859.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I wrote to my Mother the day before yesterday, and although this is *almost* certain to be too late for the mail, yet as it has a chance I send it.

They say there is no rest for the wicked, and if so I am surely bad enough, as I have just got a telegraphic message to start with a company

of my regiment to Kohat, to join the expedition against the Wuzeeree tribe. I wish they had allowed me to take more men, but in our trade one can't remonstrate, and I must do my best with what they allow me. I suspect the fact is that the whole population about here are Mussulmans like the Wuzeerees, and they fear to take away too many of our Seikhs for fear of a row here.

However, the selection is flattering, as far as I am concerned, and I shall do my best. If Brigadier Chamberlain commands and there is any work, I will at any rate be mentioned in orders, and I hope and expect not unfavourably, so it may help me to the command.

The regiment is still as when I last wrote to you—3 officers under arrest.

I will write to my Mother from Kohat if I can get time, but I fear it will be a great bustle to get 10,000 men started. However, I will try. You can use your own discretion in showing her this.—With love to Helen and bairns, I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

I fear neither medals nor Victoria Crosses will be going here. I have the former and have worked hard for the latter, but my luck has been hard so far.

## LETTERS

[8TH DEC.

### LETTER XXXVII

CAMP GOOMUT,  
15 MILES FROM KOHAT,  
8th December 1859.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—I wrote a few lines to you from Shumshabad as soon as I was ordered to join the Wuzeeree field force under General Chamberlain, and now take up my pen to let you know what has happened since.

On Saturday. the 3rd, the camels did not come from the Commissariat at Attock until too late to start that day. (*N.B.*—They used to allow us to keep up our own carriage, and then we were ready to march at a moment's notice; now they are becoming economical, and it may take days to start a regiment.)

On Sunday morning at daybreak I started off the party for a village called Choe, about 19 miles from Shumshabad and 6 from Campbellpore, where I was stationed a short time. After lunch I went off myself, having laid out a horse half way, and taking an Arab of Major Hovenden's the first half; the result was that I did the 19 miles in about an hour and a half and got into camp shortly after the men. My tent was pitched. a fire in the stove, and dinner ready. The police all through the district as far



as Kooshealgurh very civil, as they and all natives believe that I am the *uncle* of Lt. John Chalmers, the magistrate, and that I consequently must be a swell. I don't know how this idea got about among the natives, but the result is that not only the officers of my regiment, but every one else, call me Uncle John when they wish to *chaff* me.

KOHAT, 10th.

When so far I was called away to some duty or other, so put the letter by.

From Choe I marched to Tutta, 15 miles through hills, very barren and without a single house all the way; from Tutta to Jhund, 17 miles of a level country; from Jhund to the River Indus is 8 miles, and we crossed to Kooshealgurh in the Kohat district. From there to Kohat it is two marches of 15 miles each, through a very wild and unsettled country, where we might have had a rush from the hills on our baggage and ammunition any moment, but we arrived here without firing a shot.

When I came in yesterday I called first on General Chamberlain, who is to command the force, and he was very kind and civil; offered me breakfast, and said I had made great haste, and that he was very glad indeed that I had come with the party myself. I then got a place for my men to pitch their tents, and looked

## LETTERS [10TH DEC.

about amongst the force for old friends, and I can assure you I had a hearty welcome. Four regiments invited me to be a guest at their messes as long as I was with the force, viz. the Guides, with whom I was at Delhi; the 1st and 4th Punjaub Infantry, who were at Delhi, Lucknow, and Rohilcund; and the 2nd Punjaub Cavalry, who were with me at Philibet. The latter gave a dinner, and, although so far out of the world, the champagne sparkled as well as in more civilised parts.

A fine force is collecting here, but I *think* it is *small* for the purpose. We shall have 6 Punjaub infantry regiments and 1 of cavalry; 6 9-pound guns. and 8 mountain train guns on mules. Capt. Pollard, my old friend, is chief engineer, and he and I are putting up with the Guide Corps, who are as good a lot of fellows as one would wish to see. The Guides were Hodson's corps before the mutiny, and are one of the best fighting regiments to be found anywhere. We have no European soldiers with us, as they require too many tents, etc., in the hills.

The Guides and one mountain train battery and my company are to start on ahead on Monday to explore the road, and the rest of the force will follow about Wednesday. I shall send you a note now and then as to how we get on, as it is a new and interesting country we are to

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## KOHAT

visit that has not yet been seen by any European. The enemy muster strong, but ours, though small, is a good and tried force. Our General is about the best in India, and knows hill-work well, and all the officers of the force know and trust each other, and we are more like brothers than anything else, so you may suppose I am pretty jolly at the change from the dull life of Shumshabad.

About our regiment: I think it is an awful shame of the Com.-in-Chief, and I am thoroughly disgusted. Major Hovenden is deprived of the command and another man put in who is generally disliked, without giving me a chance to apply, and the young beast who was the cause of all is only removed to another regiment. It is a shame, and I think you will see me next year on a year's leave, as I am completely disgusted with the whole thing—but there is no use grumbling.—With love to Mother and Helen, I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XXXVIII

KOHAT, 11th December 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Here I am so far on the way to the country of the Wuzerees, who,

## LETTERS [11TH DEC.

it seems, require a thrashing, having come down the other day to our country and murdered an officer who was travelling along the road.

I have written Bruce an account of the whole affair so far, and, although in these hills and in a country not yet visited by Europeans we will have much exposure and hard work, I expect to spend a very pleasant month or two, as my companions are a very jolly lot, and the force is very well equipped in every way.

Major Hovenden has been turned out of the regiment on account of a row whilst I was in Cashmere. I am very sorry indeed for it, and Lord Clyde has appointed another Commandant whom I don't know, but I hear he is a very disagreeable man.

Having given Bruce all the news, I really don't know what more to say, except that although I will write every time I can get an opportunity, you must not be surprised if you are a month or even two without a letter, as the day we leave Kohat—that is to-morrow—we leave all roads, posts, and everything of that sort behind us.—With love to all, believe me, my dear Mother, your ever aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

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TUTTA

LETTER XXXIX

CAMP TUTTA,  
IN THE WIZKEEFF HILLS,  
*2nd January 1860.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 17th November I received here yesterday, and its enclosure from Eliza Mackenzie.

I am very glad they have seen Mr. Macleod, who told me he was an uncle of John Mackenzie's, but I was not aware he had gone home. I thought he was only in the hills for his health. He is Financial Commissioner of the Punjaub, and next to Sir Robert Montgomery, the Lt.-Governor, in point of authority and influence, and I am very glad to hear that he spoke so well of my exertions.

I am still with the 24th and am again Officiating Commandant—at least I have seen myself in orders, but being here on service with a small detachment have not been able to take command, and no doubt before I rejoin Major Morgan will have taken the command. I fear it is all up with our Punjaub force, as the Com.-in-Chief knows none of us and fills every vacancy with utter strangers to the Punjaub and its people.

Volunteers have been called for for China.

## LETTERS

[2ND JAN.

and I have written to our regiment to volunteer. They say they would gladly do so if I was to command, but don't seem to like the idea under a stranger. I will do what I can to make them, and if they do not go I shall myself volunteer to go as a supernumerary with some of the *old* Punjaub corps, any of which will be glad enough to get me, I dare say. I am myself anxious for a change, and if I am to be a soldier, my only chance to get on is to keep doing something.

Here we have had some hill fighting, but it will count for nothing, and never get into general orders, as we have no European force and no swells in command. *General* Chamberlain, the Commander of the Punjaub frontier, is only a regimental Captain, and is a year younger than me, so he has no influence to get anything that he does brought forward nowadays.

All our work is now over in the fighting way, but we have still a few villages to look up and two or three blackguards to catch, after which we shall be starting homewards. We have done them no end of harm, and I fancy they will think twice before they cut another European's throat.

On New Year's Eve I dined with the 2nd Punjaub Cavalry, who were at Philibeet with

me. We were very glad to meet again. They gave us cockey-leekey, salmon, and haggis (made in Edinburgh, and sent out in tins), washed down with whisky toddy.

I fancy the weather here is as cold as it is in Scotland, or nearly so. If water is left in the basin at night, it is solid in the morning.

I send you a letter I had from Brigadier Troup a day or two ago. You see he expected me to get the corps, but is mistaken. I never quite expected it myself.

General Chamberlain has been very civil to me indeed. He had me to dinner the other day alone, and advised me strongly to go in for China, and says if I get anything to do there that I *must* eventually get command of a regiment, but acknowledges that being an *outsider*—that is, not having come into the service in the regular way—I will always find it uphill work.

When I wrote to Brigadier Troup you will see that I was rather ill, and had some idea that I might require a change to Scotland, but the stir and excitement have put me all right, and I am now as well as ever I was.

A local Ensign's pay here is £180, and a Lieutenant's £300 a year, besides the allowances as second in command £300 more, but somehow money does not stick to my fingers. I am

## LETTERS

[2ND JAN.

certainly not extravagant, but somehow I *can't* take care of money, and don't suppose I ever shall.—Love to all, and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son,            JOHN CHALMERS.

Every one here uses longish *guard* chains to watches, as when wearing uniform we have no waistcoats to put them in.

My stupid servant has mislaid Brig. Troup's letter, so I can't find it just now.

## LETTER XL

CAMP TUTTA,  
IN THE WUZEEREE HILLS,  
2nd January 1860.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—When I wrote from Kohat I promised you some account of our little expedition, and here goes for it.

On the 14th Decr. we left Kohat, and marched for 4 days up a wide and fertile valley, now well cultivated and peaceful, although 3 or 4 years ago it was fighting, every village against the next. The 5th day took us through hills and some very beautiful scenery, and our 6th march we lost all traces of roads, and went along the bed of a river, full of large boulder



stones. The 9-pounder guns, however, got on famously, and you would have liked to see the way the Punjaub gunners drive, and the country they will go over. Four pair of horses to each gun and waggon, and as many spare horses and men as those employed, do get over the ground. This march brought us to Thull, on the banks of the river Koorum, the boundary between our territory and that of the Ameer of Cabul, to whom the Wuzerees are supposed to be subjects.

In this river 2 officers in 3 hours' fishing with fly took 73 fish, the largest 25 pounds and the smallest  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds—not a bad bag, you will say, and no doubt the first time the fish had seen a fly with a hook and line to it.

Next day we crossed the river to Bullund Khail, a large village belonging to the King of Cabul, and 10 miles from the tribe with whom we had the quarrel.

Here the General halted a day, and got all the information he could about the best way to get at the gentlemen, who lived amongst very difficult hills. He found there were two ways to get at them, and having fixed upon the one best, sent me out on the *other* with a party of men to improve it. The result, of course, was that the Wuzerees got information, and defended themselves on that side. He got up

## LETTERS

[2ND JAN.

some hours before daylight, marched by the way I did not make, and attacked them before they expected him.

We had one man killed and 9 or 10 wounded. They had 24 or 25 killed, and about 50 wounded, and 4 villages destroyed, and lots of cattle and sheep taken off.

Next day, 23rd, the General went one way with half the force, and sent Major Lumsden, of the Guides, with the rest, another, and we were to meet at night at a place called Shewa. I was with Major L.'s force, but we saw nothing of the enemy. When we arrived at the place of meeting, we had a letter from the General that he had met the enemy, but after the last day's lesson they did not stand much, and that he could not return till next day.

His force bivouacked out all night, and next day (the 24th Dec.) came back with, amongst other spoil, 5000 sheep, which were divided amongst the men for their Christmas dinner at the rate of about a sheep a man.

On the 26th we burned some villages, but did not meet the enemy. On the 28th we had a fight and killed 6 or 7 and burned 3 villages, and took lots more of their live-stock, and on the 29th they thought they had enough, and sent in to say they would give up the murderers.

Since then we have been surveying the

country, and the enemy have sent in 17 of the relations of the murderers, but none of themselves, so I expect we shall have to stir them up again a little.

In the meantime the tribe is ruined. All their grain and stock have fallen into our hands, all their tents are burned. They don't build many houses, but those they do build are destroyed, and we are keeping them in the hills, and this is the time they ought to be getting in their crops for next year. In fact, altogether, I think they will find that killing Europeans is too expensive a luxury to be often indulged in.

Since I came out here I have been in excellent health. I live with the corps of Guides who distinguished themselves so much at Delhi, and I hope on our return from this little business we shall go off together to China.

This is certainly a splendid force in every way. I don't think such another could be easily raised, and yet the Commander-in-Chief and the Government are doing all they can to spoil it. The artillery beat anything you can conceive, and the mule batteries, 3-pounders, carry their guns over any hills that men can walk, and yet the men who *made* the corps can get no promotion in it, and men are getting commands who do not know and can't speak

## LETTERS [16TH APRIL

to their men—like our new Commandant, Major Morgan.

Since I began this letter I have one from Attock to say that *all* our corps has volunteered for China, so no doubt we will be off, and I will see if I can't make it too hot for Major Morgan. I don't know him, but from what I hear he does not like hard work much, and I will get him that if we get before an enemy, or I am mistaken.

With love to Helen and the bairns, I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

By the bye, the Wuzereee cavalry will *charge down* the side of a hill *I* would rather not walk my horse down. I never saw such horsemen.

I will write again as soon as I know about our going to China or not.

## LETTER XLI

BRIGADIER-GENERAL CHAMBERLAIN'S  
TAUK FIELD FORCE,  
NEAR DERA ISHMAIL KHAN, PUNJAUB.  
CAMP TAUK, 16th April 1860.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Since I last wrote to you from Attock I have had a busy time. The

Governor-General and Com.-in-Chief returned from Peshawur by Attock, and the engineer who had planned a tunnel under the wide and rapid river Indus, instead of a bridge over it, which was considered almost impossible, got his project sanctioned, and the next thing he did was to apply for my services and 8 companies of my regiment, me to superintend and the men to perform the most difficult part of the work, and promised that I was to stay there till it was done.

Well, I commenced work, was so busy that I missed one mail, and the next was coming on when these confounded Wuzerees broke out again, and I was at General Chamberlain's *particular request* sent off here at a moment's notice to join his force in command of 6 companies of my reg.

It is a curious thing that in the whole of this splendid force, upwards of 5000 strong, that my friend Pollard and I should have been the only two people he should have applied for by name. It was certainly a great compliment to both, but I fear it will injure me in my prospects in the tunnel, which, if successful, must have made my name as an engineer, and it has most certainly made me a complete enemy in Major Morgan, my commanding officer, who says it is a slur on his character as an officer,

## LETTERS [13TH JAN.

and has complained to the Com.-in-Chief about it, but I suppose Gen. Chamberlain cares little about that.

I have now the finest corps in camp, and hope for a chance of doing something. I will, as usual, write a sketch of the affair to Bruce, who seems to take an interest in these things, and only send these few hurried lines to let you know why I have been longer than usual in writing, and to let you know that as we march into the hills to-morrow, it may be some time before I can send another letter.

The weather is fearfully hot, and a campaign no joke. Pollard and I were talking last night, and counting up to see if *we* could afford to come home together next year.

With love to all, I am, my dear Mother, your  
aff. son. JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XLII

*Endorsement on* LT. CHALMERS'S *application to take a regiment of Pioneers to China.*

I forward this letter, as I think it possible that Lt. Chalmers's suggestion may be in accordance with the wishes of Government, and there is probably no officer in the service so fitted to raise and command a Muzbee corps.

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## KHAIRABAD

Lt. Chalmers's services must be well known to the Right Honble. the C.-in-C., but it may be well for me to attach copies of some testimonials in his possession.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN,  
*Brigadier-General.*

CAMP KOHAT,  
13th Jan. 1860

## LETTER XLIII

KHAIRABAD, NEAR ATTOCK,  
10th June 1860.

MY DEAR MOTHER, —I reached here last night completely done up with my long and hot march from Bunnoo, but as this is the last day for the mail, tired as I am and busy too, I must send a line or two to say how sorry I am you should have been so long without a letter.

From about a fortnight after I wrote we were entirely cut off from all communication by the enemy, except I think twice, on both of which occasions, although Pollard was in camp and wrote to his wife, I was out on duty and did not know of it till too late.

Bunnoo I reached in the morning, after a long march, and had not a moment to myself till evening, when I was ordered off again, and

## LETTERS

[8TH AUG.

so lost my chance of a post office till I reached here last night. I am now in my house, which is pretty comfortable, and hope for some little *comparative* rest, but I suppose they won't give me much, as I found I had been again applied for, for the tunnel work.

I will write a long letter about our adventures in a few days when we get settled. I find you address me as Commandant 24 P.I. I only officiated, and am still 2nd in Com., but think I see a glimpse of light through the gloom, in the way of a *prospect* of a regiment of my own, but am far from sanguine yet.

I was much amused with the *Levec*, and should much like to see 'How not to do it.'

Respects to Bruce, love to all. If he can't come here to buy rags, why does he not get them bought for him where labour is only 3d. a day and have them sent home? I am sure it would pay him.—I am, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XLIV

KHAIRABAD, ATTOCK,

8th Aug. 1860.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I received your letter of the 17th June enclosed in the big paper with the long words, which I will return signed as



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## KHAIRABAD

soon as I meet with two people who can write English, and have English names, to sign it as witnesses, as I suppose no others would do.

I had a clergyman staying here with me for some days, but he is away again. Whilst here he baptized 4 more of the soldiers, one other man, a soldier's wife, and two of the soldier's children, and he had a lot more in training.

I don't know how you can be 4 months since you had a letter. I only once missed a monthly mail.

It is possible that, as for two months my letters were sent from camp, they were miscarried, but I should have thought not.

I see you address me as Commandant. I am still only second in command. The confirmation of the order was nothing. It was only that I had assumed command in order to sign returns, etc. etc. etc., till Major Morgan joined.

I don't like him, and wish I could get out of the corps now. I could easily get a Frontier Police Corps for myself, and it would increase my pay very much—in fact, double it—but I fear that I could not stand the work now as I once could.

I have hopes of getting a sapper corps to raise for the Punjaub force.

As my letters seem not to have reached, I will tell you in a few words what I have been

## LETTERS

[8TH AUG.

about since January. At the end of Jany. I returned from the 1st Wuzereee expedition, and commanded the corps until Major Morgan joined. In March (about the 8th) I came here with 8 companies to take care of the tunnel works, and by special application of the Superintendent, and by order of the Gov.-General, I have got full charge of all the work, which is going on satisfactorily.

On the 28th March, having been applied for by General Chamberlain, I went on the 2nd Wuzereee expedition, and remained away till the 8th June, during which time I had 4 soldiers and 5 camp followers killed, and 7 soldiers and 4 camp followers wounded.

Since then I have been here looking after the tunnel and trying to keep myself as cool as I can with a thermometer at 105° in the house.

Besides the tunnel work I have 5 companies of the regiment to look after, without any European to help me, and, what is worse to me, the Gov. threaten to turn every one out of their situation who can't pass an examination in Hindoostanee, and although I can speak it very well, I can't spell or write correct grammar, and I have to work away every day at a grammar and dictionary to learn a language that I never require to read, write, or speak,

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## KHAIRABAD

because the Government are too ignorant to know that the Punjaub is a different country from Calcutta, inhabited by different people who speak a different language.

I suppose from your letter that Mrs. Pollard is or has been with you. I hope she will enjoy her visit, as both she and her husband have been very kind indeed to me.

During the last expedition we had a much larger force than on the former one, but pretty much the same officers. We *had* an officer killed, so the report in the newspaper must have been incorrect. We also lost about 80 men killed, and as many more wounded, for this time the Wuzercees fought like demons. We did them a lot of harm, but they have not given in, and we expect another expedition in September.

Col. Lumsden of the Guides, I hear, was cut down in his own fort by a servant in his regiment, a tent-pitcher, the other day. I have not heard particulars, but they say the wound or wounds are not severe. He was one of the most popular men in his regiment I ever knew, and I hope the scoundrel will be hanged.

Love to Eliza and Helen, and best respects to the Mackenzies and Bruce; and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTERS

[12TH AUG.

### LETTER XLV

KHAIRABAD, NEAR ATTOCK,

12th Aug. 1860.

MY DEAR BRUCE,—Grouse-shooting does not commence here to-day for many reasons, the first and most conclusive being that there are no grouse. Besides, it is Sunday. So I sit down to write you a few lines.

I had a letter from my Mother the other day, which I answered at once, sending her back a paper signed. Why can't lawyers write English? In that document I met many words not to be found in either Johnson or Webster, and of the meaning of which I had not the most remote idea.

My Mother complains much of my not having written regularly lately, but if she only knew how shamefully I have been overworked and knocked about lately, she would not think I have been remiss. I only missed one month, and that was more her fault and Eliza's than my own, as they vexed me so, that, although I wrote a good many letters, there was not one I could send after reading it over.

Early in March I was sent here with 3 companies of the reg. to commence work on the Indus Tunnel, which, if it is ever finished—and

I see no reason to doubt it—will be one of the boldest engineering works in the world. The Governor-General said I was not to be removed until the first passage was through, and as I knew that must be at least two years, I began to build a house in hopes to make myself comfortable before the hot weather, but alas for all hopes founded on such promises. I got on the 27th March a telegraph ordering me off to join Gen. Chamberlain's force at Taik. This I did the same day with 420 men of the reg., Capt. Pollard of the Engineers and I being the only officers specially applied for. Till the 10th of June I was engaged on this expedition, and returned then to the tunnel, which has been getting on very favourably since.

As to the expedition. We left Taik, a place in the Derajat, mentioned in Col. Edwards's *Year on the Punjab Frontier* as Tāk, on the 15th April, it being then fearfully hot, and the same day entered the Wuzzeerce Hills. We found the pass fortified, but the natives did not stand. On the third day we reached the village of Paloseen, which with all its cultivation and water-courses we destroyed; as also the village of Shing-Kee-Ka-Kot, four miles further on. After halting there a day the General divided his force, leaving half at Paloseen under Col. Lumsden, and taking half up the Sahoose

## LETTERS

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Valley. I accompanied him with 200 of my men, leaving the rest under Ensign Gustavinski behind. The first day we had a skirmish, in which we had a man and horse wounded, and a horse killed, the enemy leaving 3 dead bodies behind them. We went up this valley for 4 days, the enemy retiring before us, and we destroyed all the villages, fields, and water-courses we met with, blowing up the fortified towers.

On the 27th we returned to Paloseen, and then found that just before daylight on the 23rd the enemy had attacked the camp in great force and killed some 50 men and wounded 80 others, but they were beaten off, leaving 119 dead on the ground, a fact that shows they must have got the worst of it, as they always carry away the dead if they can do so at all. They afterwards owned to a loss of 180 in all killed.

I was very sorry I was not with my men in this affair, as they lost 4 killed and 8 wounded, and had an idea that it was through mismanagement of the very young officer in charge, and that had I been there they would have lost no one. Be that as it may, they were most favourably mentioned in the report. Twenty-eight dead bodies of the enemy were counted in and about their tents, and none of them got past the 24th or reached the guns, which were the points aimed at.

We had now to halt at Paloseen for 4 days so as to get the wounded men sent back to Tauk, but had to shift the camp a mile to get away from the stench of the dead bodies of men and animals.

On the 1st May we resumed our march towards Cannsgorrum, the Wuzecree capital, and got on without serious interruption until the 5th, when we found a narrow pass called Barrara strongly fortified, with a stone wall crowned with a mass of felled trees shutting up the whole road. This was defended by a strong force of the enemy, whilst the heights on both sides were crowned by stone walls defended by a force estimated at 6000 men.

We halted here about half an hour to reconnoitre, and the two 9-pound guns and four 24-pound Howitzers went to the front supported by the 4th Punj. Inf. on their left and the 24th under me on the right, and opened with both shot and shell on the hills. The hill on the left was attacked by the Guide Corps, the 6th Punj. Inf. and the 6th Belooch Batt., with 1 guns of the Peshawur mountain train, which are carried on mules.

That on the right was attacked by the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Punj. Inf. and the Hazara mountain train on mules; but the infantry were in reverse order, that is, the 3rd Reg. were in

## LETTERS

[12TH AUG.

front, supported by the 2nd, and the 1st held in reserve a little behind the 2nd.

The reserve of the whole force consisted of the 4th Seikh Reg., the Ghoorka Battalion, the 14th Punj. Inf., a lot of armed hill-men, and the cavalry.

At first our attention was taken up by the heavy guns firing at the enemy on the hills, but in a short time we saw our troops on the left get into action. The 3rd P. I. at first advanced steadily, but lost a lot of men and seemed to hesitate. The Wuzerees came out from their walls, sword in hand. The 3rd wavered and eventually *ran*, mixed up with the 2nd and a few of the 1st. When they reached the mountain guns which Capt. Butt had got to work, he fired round after round of grape between them and the Wuzerees, and they seemed to see that there was no safe road for them that way, so turned round and joined the 1st, the bulk of whom had stood firm, in a fresh attack which completely succeeded. In the meantime, from our position below, things looked very bad, and the General came up to me and told me to advance and take the hill, taking care not to be driven back by the fugitives. He added, 'Chalmers, I depend on you and the 24th. This is no time to hesitate. There is no use to turn back, as there is no place to go to if beaten.'



Before he finished speaking I had my men started, ran to their head, and went up the hill at as good a pace as I could, keeping my men together at the same time, and taking care not to blow them so as to be out of breath when the crash I expected should come. I admit I thought most of the prospect of promotion, and was determined at any price that the hill should be ours; but when I came to a small plateau two-thirds of the way up where Capt. Butt had stationed his guns, and having passed 2 or 3 hundred fugitives on the way, I found that the reg. had rallied, returned to the charge and taken the heights. (This was the first spot from which I could get a view since I had left the General.) So all that remained for me to do was to collect the wounded and dead, which I did.

The troops on the right had no serious check, so we took the pass and encamped late in the day, very tired, on the upper side of it.

The following day we started before dawn and made a forced march to Cannsgorrum, the capital, which was spared as it was not defended.

We stayed there 4 or 5 days for the sake of the wounded, and enjoyed a perfectly English climate and scenery, when we started for Mackeane, another large place which I destroyed, burned, and blew up, having two more

## LETTERS [12TH AUG.

men wounded there. We started home by another road *viâ* Bunnoo. Mackeane was a beautiful place, quite English in scenery and climate. We got out on the plain of Bunnoo on the 17th May, having been a month and two days in the hills, in a country never before visited by a European.

I had a fearfully hot march here, where I arrived on the 10th June. June in tents in India is something you can't conceive, but, however, my health has benefited much by the trip and hard work, and the General and all the senior officers of the force were so well pleased with the performance of the detachment that they have applied to Government to raise a regiment of Muzbee sappers for the Frontier, and have requested that the command should be given to me; that is all I know, and I will make them a good regiment, I think.

I was offered the command of the Frontier Police lately, 300 cavalry and 1300 infantry, equal to two infantry regiments and two-thirds of a cavalry one, but I refused it. The fact was, the offer came when I was ill and disgusted with the letters I had received from Scotland, so I lost the chance. I hear, however, that it will be again vacant, and if then in good health I may try, as upwards of £1400 a year is not to be despised, even with police.

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## KHAIRABAD

I am sorry to hear that things don't look well for paper-makers. How is it that half the paper sold here is French ?

A paper-mill in India must afford a certain fortune, for the following reasons:—Rags are plenty and go to waste. Wages of able-bodied men are 3d. a day; women and boys 2d. The consumption of paper, particularly foolscap, is immense, and besides the long sea passage it has to have 1200 miles of land carriage paid for it.

Water power and clear water is also in abundance.

I have often thought that it would pay to collect rags here, pound them up into pulp and press it into bricks, dry them and send them home to be broken up and repulped.

Could paper be made out of the fibre of the flax and hemp plants without first turning it into cloth? If so, there is hardly any limit to the quantity procurable at very cheap rates.

I am, my dear Bruce, yours sincerely,

JOHN CHALMERS.

Love to Helen and the bairns.

I don't think I have exceeded the stamp I put on this, but have no weights. If I should have done so, it will cost you a shilling, and you will call it a bad bargain.

## LETTERS

[23RD AUG.

### LETTER XLVI

KHAIRABAD, ATTOCK,

*23rd Aug. 1860.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letters of the 10th and 11th July I received last night, and wrote off this morning to Capt. Pollard, who is now spending a month at Murree, but whom I expect here on his way to Peshawur in a few days.

I am very sorry indeed to hear of Mrs. Pollard's illness, and hope your kindness to her may be equal to that shown me by Pollard and herself when I have been ill in their house. I sincerely hope she will soon get strong, as she had been far from well for a long time before she left India. I shall be very anxious indeed for your next letter.

I wish I could see the two eldest girls. They, I am sure, would remember me quite well. The little ones I don't know so well, as I was away from Goojerat on the campaign for more than two years. I should be very sorry indeed if they are not properly treated. Pollard seems to think them singularly fortunate in the place they are living and the people they live with, and I fear it would be a very delicate thing to interfere in any way. Mrs. Pollard has lots of good sense and influence over her husband, and

1860]

## KHAIRABAD

although the place is much recommended by *his* family, if she is not satisfied, she will easily have her own way in anything she may propose.

Pollard, I believe, has made up his mind to go home for Mrs. Pollard, but I *can't* go—that is all about it, so there is no use saying more on that subject.

I wrote Bruce a long letter last week, I think on the 12th. You ought to have had a letter from me the same mail as that you saw from Pollard. I wrote on the 14th or 15th April from Tauk, just before we got into the hills.

If Mrs. Pollard should not have left, give her my best respects, and tell her that I only hope she has been as happy and comfortable in your house as I have been in hers, and tell her not to let the children forget me, as I won't forgive her if I find they do so.

With love to Eliza and Helen, and best respects to Mackenzie and Bruce. I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

## LETTER XLVII

KHAIRABAD, 8th Sept, 1860

MY DEAR MOTHER,—About 10 days ago I got your letter dated early in July telling me

## LETTERS

[8TH SEPT.]

Mrs. Pollard was ill and at your house, and as I knew Pollard was at Murree and that his letters would go to Peshawur, I wrote off to him at once.

On the 4th Pollard came here and gave me a note you had enclosed to him, and the day before yesterday I received yours dated July 27th, which, as his of that mail had gone to Peshawur, I showed Pollard, who was in Attock. Yesterday he went to Campbellpore to examine a quarry of the stone of which he intends to build a monument to Nicholson, but returns to-night, and spends to-morrow (Sunday) with me.

I hope Mrs. Pollard is now better and that she won't give way to what I call *skittles* and come out here until she is quite well, and he can go home for her. He will go the moment he has the necessary money *in hand*, but he won't borrow and won't run in debt, and after so many years' absence does not want to go back except as being able to see everything that is to be seen, and pay his own way. And he is right. Besides, he knows that she must be at least another year at home to get strong.

I should be very sorry indeed if my little pets were not attended to, and after the kindness they have always been accustomed to, they would feel it, I am sure. But surely the amount

paid for three such little girls should be sufficient to procure them every comfort and good attendance? Pollard and I had a long talk over the matter, and I think he will write to Mrs. P. to take them away and settle herself somewhere with a governess for them. We will probably have some more talk on the subject to-morrow, as he knows that I take a very great interest in the brats.

If Mrs. P. is still with you, give her my best respects, and tell her that she is no more fit to come out to Peshawur at present than I am to be Governor-General, and that I would rather go without tea for two years or *without beer for two days* than that she should come out until she is perfectly set up again.

Could she not settle somewhere within 4 or 5 miles of Edin. with the bairns, and get them a good governess?—or Cheltenham, or Bath, or somewhere, if she don't like where they are?

I wrote a long letter to Bruce last mail. Tell him I am ashamed of him that he does not get up volunteers and become a Major at least. If he will be a Colonel and give me his Adjutancy on ten shillings a day, I will take it, and give him private drills myself for dinners and grog, but I could not go so low as a sergeant on a pound a week.

Give my love to Helen and Eliza, and respects

## LETTERS [15TH OCT.

to Bruce and John Mackenzie, likewise to Hugh, David, and others; and believe me, my dear Mother, your aff. son, JOHN CHALMERS.

You and Mrs. Pollard seem to joke about the rags, but I really believe in it, and if Bruce is game to try, I will put him in the way of getting a *small quantity to try*.

## LETTER XLVIII

MURREL, 15th Oct. 1862.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—When I wrote to you on the 1st I had been rather unwell and was starting off here for a change of air. Well, I set off the same day, and on the way got a good deal worse and had to stay 4 days in Rawalpindee, where I was very kindly entertained and attended to by Major Cracroft, the Deputy Commissioner (Judge) and his family, with whom I stayed, and on my arrival here I came to the Taylors, who have been as attentive and kind to me as if I was their brother or son. Col. Taylor, C.B., is the Lieut. Taylor with whom I got my first civil situation in India, some 11 years ago, and he has a wife and sister and two children.



I have had a pretty severe attack of liver complaint, but a good doctor and first-rate nursing have brought me on all right, and all I have now to do is to get strong, for which purpose I am prescribed calves'-foot jelly, very strong soups, and sparkling Hock.

I had just got thus far when the Doctor called and says I am very much better, indeed quite well, except weakness.

In Pindee I saw Capt. Pollard. He was up here and only returned the day I left, otherwise I should have stopped in their house. Mrs. Pollard I did not see, and she and I passed in the night, I coming up here and she going down. I hope to stay a day or two with them on my return.

I often feel how grateful I ought to be to God who has raised me up so many *friends*, not mere acquaintances, in this country.—I am, my dear Mother, your aff. son,

JOHN CHALMERS.

Mr. M'Leod was here to breakfast this morning, the first time I have seen him since he returned to India.



## APPENDIX

*To the Right Honourable the Commander-in Chief  
in India,*

THE MEMORIAL OF CAPTAIN JOHN CHALMERS,  
UNATTACHED LIST, BENGAL ARMY,

HIMMAY SHEWETH —

That on the 27th June 1857 your memorialist, being then a passed Civil Engineer in Government employ, and having for nearly two years officiated as Executive Engineer, 1st Division Lahore and Peshawur Road, had served the Honble East India Company for nine years, nearly eight of which he had passed in India.

He being then a Civilian, was ordered by the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab to proceed to Phillour to join the 24th Punjab Infantry (Pioneers) as Adjutant with the Local Rank of Ensign, and he unhesitatingly did so, starting within four hours of the receipt of the telegram, leaving all his property to take care of itself, and without for a moment considering the injurious effect his becoming a soldier so late in life must inevitably exercise on his professional and pecuniary interests during the remainder of his service.

The annexed statement of services will show that your memorialist served with that corps during the whole of the Indian Mutiny, and in two expeditions against refractory tribes on the North-West Frontier, also, that he raised 1740 men for Abyssinia, and served through the campaign

## APPENDIX

there. For these various services he has 3 medals and 3 clasps, and he trusts that a perusal of the accompanying copies of testimonials and extracts from General Orders will shew that he always did his duty with energy, zeal, and success.

In September 1859 the corps was transferred to the regular Army on the Bengal Establishment, in which it still exists as the 32nd N. I. (Pioneers), and your memorialist was transferred with it as an Unattached Lieutenant with the permanent appointment of 2nd in Command.

The result of this transfer to the regular Bengal Establishment, and his name having only been entered as a Lieutenant on the Unattached List from the date of that transfer, he had not then experience or knowledge enough of the rules of the service to anticipate; but it has been that every officer who entered the service between 27th June 1857 and September 1859 now stands senior to him in the Army List, and that he has even been superseded by 2 officers borne on the same Unattached List as himself, who had not received their first commission from the ranks until after he had served in the field as Adjutant, 2nd in Command, and even as Commandant of a Regiment.

Under these circumstances, your memorialist most respectfully petitions that the commission of Captain may be allowed to date from 27th June 1869, that being 12 years from the period of his joining the Regiment as Adjutant, instead of the 4th July 1871, and that thus the supersession under which he at present labours may be obviated; and that, having then completed the full term of 20 years' service, he may (in accordance with the annexed letter A 1) be promoted to a substantive Majority, or, should that be considered inadmissible, that he may obtain a Brevet Majority in consideration of his field services; and in support of this petition he trusts that His Excellency will take into consideration the fact that he is now the only officer in the

## APPENDIX

service who commanded a detachment at the assault of Delhi who has not already obtained this rank, and that perhaps there is no previous instance on record of an officer who has frequently commanded a regiment in action and in the field, remaining so long without brevet, if not substantive rank, as a Field Officer.

And your petitioner will ever pray, &c.

JOHN CHALMERS, CAPTAIN,  
*Unattached Lst, Bengal Army.*

DALHOUSIE, 20th July 1877.

### A 1.

*Extract of a Letter from the Secretary to the Government of  
India, Military Department, to the Adjutant-General,  
No. 474, dated 14th October 1872*

(Paras. 1 and 2.)

1. I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter noted in the margin submitting a memorial from Captain J. CHALMERS, with the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S recommendation that the rank of Major in the Army be conferred on that officer, and further that Captain CHALMERS' previous service be allowed to count towards pension.

OFFICER'S PENSION SERVICE  
Promotion  
No. 2024 A,  
dated 14th  
June 1872.

2. In reply, I have to state for HIS EXCELLENCY'S information that Captain CHALMERS' present commission having been bestowed on him in accordance with the Staff Corps rate of promotion, His Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL in Council regrets to be unable to recommend him for the rank of Major when he has only been 14 months a Captain. \* \* \*

TRUE EXTRACT,

(Signed) G. E. HOLMES, COLONEL,  
*Offg. Deputy Adjutant General.*

## APPENDIX

### STATEMENT OF SERVICES OF CAPTAIN JOHN CHALMERS, UNATTACHED LIST, H.M.'S BENGAL ARMY.

IN May 1857 Mr. CHALMERS had been 9 years in Government employ and nearly 8 in India; was a passed Civil Engineer, and officiated as Executive Engineer, 1st Division Lahore and Peshawur Road.

During that and the following month he raised and drilled 400 recruits for a new Punjab Regiment, and fortified a post at Gujranwala for the protection of the Treasury and officials.

On the 27th June 1857, by order of the CHIEF COMMISSIONER of the Punjab, he joined the 24th Punjab Pioneers *Vide annexure* (now the 32nd N. I.) as Adjutant, with the A. local rank of Ensign, and served with them throughout the Mutiny, doing at all times the additional work of Assistant Field Engineer.

During the siege of Delhi he was constantly employed *Vide annexure* in the batteries and trenches; and at the A, B, C, and E assault commanded the ladder party with General NICHOLSON'S column, for which he has a medal and clasp.

In September 1857 he became 2nd in Command, and *Vide annexure* shortly afterwards Officiating Commandant of B. the Corps.

When officiating as Commandant during November 1857, *Vide annexures* he was employed in the Agra district, and A and D. whilst serving with a force under Col. HENNESSY, led the assault on 5 fortified villages.

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At Allumbagh he was engaged twice with the enemy, and served during the siege and capture of Lucknow as 2nd in Command of the 24th and as Asst. Field Engineer, for which he has a clasp.

*See annexure B.*

From Lucknow he marched to Bareilly with General WALPOLE's Column, and was present at the affairs at Rhuiya and Allagunge and at the taking of Bareilly.

*See annexure A.*

In June and July 1858 he built barracks and fitted existing buildings at Bareilly for the accommodation of the 93rd Highlanders and a wing of the 42nd Highlanders.

*See annexures F & G, & Extracts Genl Order attached*

In August and September 1858 he fortified Phulbeet and Noorya, and repulsed an attack of the enemy on the latter place and led the assault on the enemy's

*See annexures H & I, & Extracts Genl Order attached  
See annexure A*

position at Sirpoorea, taking two 9-pounder brass guns. About the same time he was promoted to a local lieutenancy, and in recognition of these services he was, some years

afterwards, permitted by an order of the Governor-General in Council to draw Assistant Field Engineer's allowances in addition to those of 2nd in Command whilst with the Regiment, but very soon this advantage was lost by his being obliged to leave the Corps through ill health.

In September 1859 the 24th Panjab Pioneers was transferred to the regular Bengal Establishment as the 34th N. I. (subsequently altered to the 32nd N. I.), and Lieut CHALMERS was brought on the strength in the rank he then held, viz. Lieutenant, but was placed on the unattached list, -an arrangement by which he lost many advantages he might otherwise have enjoyed.

In December 1859, being then in temporary Command of the 32nd N. I., he went on the first Wazari expedition under General Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, who strongly recommended him to Government as especially qualified to

## APPENDIX

raise and Command a Pioneer Regiment for service in China.

From January 1860 to April 1863, with the exception of the time taken up with the second Wazari expedition, he was constantly employed with a wing of the 32nd N. I. *See annexure K* in excavating the tunnel under the Indus at Attock, and in constructing a towing-path on the bank of the river. In April and May 1860 he commanded a detachment of the Regiment over 400 strong on the second Wazari expedition under General CHAMBERLAIN, and was favourably mentioned in the report of the Chief Engineer; Indian medal and clasp

In April 1863, after 15 years' continuous service in the plains of India, he was compelled by ill health to leave the Regiment and seek for temporary Civil employment in a Hill climate.

In December 1867 he was directed to organise a corps of muleteers for service in Abyssinia, and in 15 days he enrolled, clothed, and armed 1740 men, and succeeded in landing them all at Zoolla in serviceable condition by the 11th February 1868, except 4 who died on the passage

On his arrival in Abyssinia, his services were placed at the disposal of the Chief Engineer, and he was directed to make a road through the Hadoda pass. at this work he continued until its further prosecution was rendered unnecessary by the fall of Magdala, Abyssinian medal.

At the end of April 1868 he was sent to Europe on Medical Certificate for the first time in 20 years, and was unable to return until October 1870 by reason of constant returns of the fever contracted in Abyssinia, thus losing the valuable staff appointment of Deputy Conservator of Forests in a Hill district.

In April 1871 he was appointed Barrack Master at Delhi,



## APPENDIX

and in July 1871 he was promoted to the rank of Captain Unattached; he continued in Delhi as Barrack <sup>Field</sup> Master until April 1876, giving satisfaction to <sup>the</sup> <sup>annexures</sup> L & M. all his Departmental superiors, when he was obliged from weakness of sight, much aggravated, if not originally brought on, by exposure on Field service, again temporarily to seek relief in a Hill climate

JOHN CHALMERS, CAPTAIN,  
*Unattached List, Bengal Army.*

*Dalhousie, the 20th July 1877*

### A

*Extract of a Letter from CAPTAIN GULLIVER, Bengal Engineer, Commanding 24th P I, to COLONEL BAIRD SMITH, C B.*

*CAMP SAHARANPORE, 18th October 1858*

SIR,—MR JOHN CHALMERS who was as Assistant Engineer on the Lahore and Peshawur Road, joined me at Phillour on the 27th June 1857, by order of the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, and marched by double marches without tents to Delhi, which we reached on the 9th July, just in time to take part in the action of that day

He was appointed Local Ensign, Adjutant of the Punjab Pioneers, and Asst Field Engineer, and in these capacities gave the greatest satisfaction to every one under whom he served. In the assault, commanded a detachment of the Regiment forming part of the Column under General NICHOLSON which stormed the breach between the Kashmir Gate and the river. He was constantly employed in the City up to its final reduction on the 20th September.

## APPENDIX

The Command of the Regiment then becoming vacant by my departure on sick leave, Ensign CHALMERS was appointed to officiate as Commandant, and acted in this capacity until the 1st December, during which time he twice led detachments in the assault of fortified villages.

An extract of a letter from Major HENNESSY, who commanded on these occasions, is attached hereto.

In February 1858, as Adjutant of the Regiment, he accompanied it with the Commander-in-Chief's forces from Futtygurh to Cawnpore, and thence marched with the Engineer Brigade to Allumbagh, and was present in the skirmishes of the 21st and 23rd February, and through the operations against Lucknow, from the 2nd to the 16th March.

In April he joined General WALPOLE's column as officiating 2nd in Command of the Regiment, and was present at Rhuiya and Allygunge and at the capture of Bareilly, and he constructed barracks for the European troops at that station.

In July he was again appointed to officiate as Commandant of the Regiment, and marched with 200 men to Philibeet, which he put in a state of defence. On the 29th August he went with 100 men to put the thanah of Nooriya into a state of defence, and, in conjunction with a small party of the 2nd Bengal Cavalry, drove back a superior force of the enemy with 3 guns who attacked him. On the 30th August he led the infantry in the attack on the enemy's position at Sirpoorea, and his detachment captured two nine-pounder guns. For this he was mentioned most honourably in despatches.

(Signed) W. H. GULLIVER, CAPTAIN, ENGINEERS,  
*Commanding 24th P. I.*

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### B.

#### *Copy of a Letter from CAPTAIN MAUNSELL, Comdg. Bengal Sappers and Miners.*

13th January 1859.

ENSIGN CHALMERS was employed under me during the siege of Delhi. I had opportunities there as Field Engineer of the trenches and as director of the right attack, of remarking him

He always performed his duty most thoroughly, and by his intelligence, his energy and the admirable manner in which he managed the men under his command, did most important service towards furthering the works, especially at the most important period, viz from the 7th to the 14th September 1857, when the works were rapidly pushed on under the close fire of the place

On the night of the 7th, the first heavy battery of 10 guns, which it was of the utmost importance to finish in the night, both as to its bearing on the plan of attack and for the saving of life, was, contrary to general expectation, completed, and the guns enabled to open as it was light.

No instance had before occurred of so extensive a battery being constructed in so short a time, and I was mainly indebted to the assistance of Ensign CHALMERS in effecting this operation.

I speak myself of what I have seen. Every officer with whom Ensign CHALMERS has served and whom I have spoken with on the subject express the same high opinion of him, and I shall be glad to find that his services meet with the adequate reward they doubtless will, if represented

(Signed) T. R. MAUNSELL, CAPTAIN, ENGINEERS,  
*Commanding Sappers and Miners.*

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### C.

*From LT.-COLONEL BAIRD SMITH, C.B., Chief Engineer,  
Delhi Field Force.*

I HAVE great pleasure in stating that Ensign JOHN CHALMERS (Offg. Commandant 24th P. I., late Punjab Pioneers) served under my command at Delhi, from July 1857 to the final capture of the place. During that period he held the appointment of Adjutant of the Corps of which he is now Acting Commandant, and was distinguished for his efficient and most gallant discharge of every duty in camp and in the trenches. Peculiarly qualified for his position by the confidence felt in him by his men, I believe the highest credit to be due to him for the manner in which a new and suddenly raised corps was organised and fitted to render most valuable service during the siege.

Since the time above alluded to, Ensign CHALMERS has been constantly employed on active service in Oudh and Rohilkund, maintaining the same high character which he so worthily earned for himself at Delhi. It will give me the sincerest pleasure if my testimony to his soldierly qualities, high personal character, and valuable services should be useful to his interests.

I can conceive no officer better qualified for the command of a corps of Pioneers formed from the Muzbee class than Ensign CHALMERS; he thoroughly understands them, whilst they seem equally to appreciate him.

(Signed) BAIRD SMITH, LT.-COLONEL,  
*late Chief Engineer Delhi F. Force.*

CALCUTTA MINT, 7th October 1858.

## APPENDIX

### D.

*From* LIEUT.-COLONEL HENNESSY, *Commanding Agra Division Police.*

LOCAL ENSIGN CHALMERS and a party of 70 or 80 Muzbee Sikhs were employed under my orders, in December last, in an expedition against rebel villages on the banks of the Ootangan river in the Agra district.

From the very difficult nature of the country in which these villages are situated, and the facilities for escape, the insurgents were very bold, firing on my party and holding their positions up to the last moment, and then plunging into the ravines.

Five villages were attacked and carried during the expedition, and I always employed Ensign CHALMERS and his party of Muzbees in front as skirmishers, on flank as coverers. They advanced on all occasions with great spirit under the matchlock fire of the enemy, and had usually dashed on and cleared the villages before the rest of the force had come up.

In pursuit through the ravines the Muzbees were very efficient in running in upon the insurgents and killing great numbers of them, always most admirably and gallantly led by Ensign CHALMERS.

In camp he held his men under perfect control and I had every reason to be perfectly satisfied with him and the Muzbee Sikh Sappers during the time they were under my command.

(Signed) J HENNESSY, Major.

*Agra, 30th Sept. 1858.*

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### E.

THE recommendation sent to Government by General Sir R. NAPIER, K.C.B., for services in Lucknow, has unfortunately miscarried and been lost, but the nature of it can be gathered from the subjoined letter from Lt-Colonel TAYLOR, Engineers, Commanding Bengal Engineers there :—

CAMP CHUMOOK, 25th Oct. 1858.

MY DEAR CHALMLERS, —There is now little doubt but that the recommendation in your favour which I sent in, in March last, has not reached its destination. Captain HUTCHINSON, who was our Major of Brigade at that time, as you will recollect, assures me that it received Brigadier-General NAPIER'S support, and was forwarded on two days after it had been received.

Further than that I have not yet traced it, but it appears to be beyond doubt that it has not reached either the Adjutant-General's Office in the Field, or the Military Secretary to Government with the Governor-General. It is many days since I wrote to Genl. NAPIER on the subject, and I now shortly expect to hear from him what has happened, but I am sorry to think that, whatever may have been the cause of the delay, your prospects have not been improved by it.

As to the eventual result there can be no doubt. Your services throughout the Mutiny, and more particularly during the sieges of Delhi and Lucknow, and the minor engagements in the interval, render you sure of a commission. I hope, however, that your reward will not stop here; your exertions in organising the Regiment deserve the greatest praise. You entered upon the duties of Adjutant when the corps was first raised in July last year, and I consider that to your excellent management is mainly to be attributed the good feeling existing among the men,

## APPENDIX

and the sound state of discipline attained by the corps under the disadvantages of incessant work and detached duty.

I know of no one better qualified for, or having higher claims for, the appointment of 2nd in Command of the Pioneers than yourself, and your getting it would be a matter of satisfaction to all who were associated with the corps in times of no ordinary difficulty, and who know how much it owes to you.—Believe me, sincerely yours,

(Signed) ALEX. TAYLOR, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL,  
*late Commanding Bengal Engineers in the Field.*

### F.

*Extract of a Letter from BRIGADIER TROUP to the DEPUTY  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL of the Division, for communication  
to HIS EXCELLENCY the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.*

BAREILLY, 9th July 1858.

To the Brigadier-General, who has daily seen their work progress immediately under his own inspection, I need hardly say that to the indefatigable exertions and good management of ENSIGN CHALMERS and his subordinates, are we mainly indebted for the speedy and efficient manner in which the Barracks at this station have been got ready. I can safely say that, during a continuous service of nearly thirty eight years in India, I have never met with so efficient, practical, hardworking, and willing a man as ENSIGN CHALMERS; and with such an example before them it is not to be wondered at that his subordinates are, in their different positions, quite as efficient as him self.

(Signed) COLIN TROUP Brigadier,  
*Commanding at Bareilly*

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### G.

*Copy of a Letter from* BRIGADIER COLIN TROUP, *Commanding at Bareilly, to* SIR JOHN LAWRENCE, K.C.B.

BAREILLY, 15th July 1858.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,—I have a favour to ask, and as I know you are a man of sharp practice who don't like your time taken up with humbug, I'll come to the point at once

I want you to give the Command of the 24th Punjab Infantry to ENSIGN CHAMBERS during the temporary absence of the Commanding Officer

I never saw or heard of ENSIGN CHAMBERS in my life until my arrival here, but I am so much indebted to him for the willing and able manner in which he has aided me in housing the European soldiers at this station, that I consider him worthy of anything I can get for him

I pronounce him to be the most practical, efficient, hard-working man that I have ever had to do with during my service of nearly 38 years, and I declare to you that, but for his able and ready assistance, we never could have got the European troops under cover before the rains set in, so that, in asking for him what I do, it is purely on public grounds, as some little reward for his labours and fatigue, and considering that he has been through the whole of the campaign, from first to last, I hope you will not think I have asked too much for him

Trusting you are keeping your health, I am, my dear Sir John, very sincerely yours,

(Signed) COLIN TROUP.



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### H.

*From CAPTAIN R. LARKINS, 17th P. I., Commanding  
at Philbeet.*

I HEREBY certify that ENSIGN CHALMERS, Offg Commdt 24th P I., arrived at Philbeet on the 27th July, since which time he has afforded me much assistance, having placed the City of Philbeet in a complete state of defence, and from thorough knowledge of Field Engineering in all its branches, his services have been most valuable to me

He went out to Nuria with 112 men of his Regiment on the 28th August and fortified the thinsah there, and when attacked by the rebels whilst at work, drove them back to Sirpoorea ENSIGN CHALMERS also was present in the engagement with the rebel force at Sirpoorea on the 30th August, and led the skirmishers on that occasion, capturing 2 out of the 4 guns taken from the enemy, and he and his men were highly spoken of in Lieut Cunliffe's despatch

I can only say that ENSIGN CHALMERS is a most zealous and indefatigable officer, and I brought him prominently to the notice of His EXCELLENCY the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF in my despatch of the 31st August last

(Signed) ROBERTSON LARKINS CAPTAIN,  
*Commanding at Philbeet*

### I

*From MAJOR SAM BROWN, Commanding 2nd  
Punjab Cavalry*

LOCAL ENSIGN JOHN CHALMERS, in temporary Command of the 24th Regiment of Punjab Infantry, served under my command in the attack and defeat of the rebels at Sirpoorea on the 30th August 1858

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I had, on previous occasions, remarked the control and discipline maintained in the 24th P. I. by Ensign CHALMERS, and it was owing to the report made to me of the very steady and excellent behaviour of the detachment under his command at Nuriya on the 29th August, that induced me to give that detachment the lead in the assault of the enemy's position at Sirpoorea on the morning of the 30th August, and their conduct was beyond all praise.

Ensign CHALMERS merited my warmest acknowledgments for the steady and determined manner he led his men to the attack on the enemy's guns.

Indeed, I consider the complete success of the action to be due to the gallant behaviour of Ensign CHALMERS and his detachment.

(Signed) SAM. BROWNE, MAJOR,  
*Commanding 2nd P. C.*

PHILADELPHIA, Sept 24th, 1858.

## K.

*Extract from the PUNJAB GOVERNMENT GAZETTE,  
No. 44, dated 1st June 1861.*

### THE INDUS TUNNEL

MEMORANDUM BY HIS HONOUR THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR, PUNJAB.

#### **By Authority —**

I visited the Tunnel at Attock on the 30th April, and as the work is one that excites considerable interest, I propose briefly recording what I saw. I asked Lieut. CHALMERS, Assistant Field Engineer, who accompanied me, for a memorandum showing the progress made, and the present state of the works. His memorandum is so full and complete, accompanied, as it is, by a sketch, that I prefer

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transcribing it for the information of the Supreme Government.

I can add that the work is being carried on most vigorously night and day, and that there does not appear to exist in the minds of any a doubt as to the success of the work. The deepest portion of the channel has been passed, and the rumbling of boulders overhead, carried along by the rapid rush of the current, has been occasionally heard.

Major ROBERTSON, the projector, has gone to England, and will purchase such machinery as is required. Captain SANDILANDS is superintending the work in his absence, but the hard work of excavating falls on Lieut. CHAMBERS of the 24th Punjab Infantry and his gallant Muzbee miners, aided by six European miners. All are indefatigable, and work with the greatest spirit.

The natives of the country are greatly interested in the work, and think far more of it than the Railway works, or system of Telegraph lines. Many come from distant places to visit it, especially from beyond the Khyber.

(Signed) R. MONTGOMERY,  
*Lieutenant-Governor, Punjab.*

*HUBLERPORE, 6th May 1861.*

L.

No. 511. *Extract of Garrison Order by Col. S. BEECHER,*  
*Eulogium. Commanding at Delhi.*

*DELHI, 15th April 1872.*

COLONEL BEECHER also desires to record his entire satisfaction with the very efficient manner in which the duties of Barrack Master have, for the last 12 months, been performed by Captain CHALMERS.

L.

## APPENDIX

### M.

*Extract of a note from MAJOR WARD, R.E., to  
CAPTAIN CHALMERS, Barrack Master, Delhi.*

*Dated DELHI, 14th January 1876.*

*[Just after the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.]*

MY DEAR CHALMERS,—I am much obliged to you for all you have done for the Camp, which has now passed off without a single complaint.

(Signed) D. WARD, MAJOR, R.E.

TRUE EXTRACTS,

(Signed) G. B. WOLSELEY, CAPTAIN,  
*Station Staff Officer.*

*Extracts from General Orders by the Right Hon'ble  
the Commander-in-Chief.*

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
ALLAHABAD, 6th November 1858.

*By the Right Hon'ble the GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.*

ALLAHABAD, 1st October 1858.

No. 441 of 1858.—The Right Hon'ble the Governor-General is pleased to direct the publication of the following letter from the Adjutant-General of the Army, No. 909 of 11th Sept. 1858, forwarding one from Brigadier-General WALPOLE, C.B., Commanding Rohilcund Division, enclosing

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a report from Captain LARKINS, Commanding at Philibeet, of a very successful affair with the rebels at Sirpoorea, in the neighbourhood of which they were defeated by Major S. J. BROWNE of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry with considerable slaughter and loss of their guns and camp.

The Governor-General cordially concurs with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in the unqualified approbation His Lordship has expressed of the ability and the daring spirit evinced in this affair by Major Browne. His Lordship also highly approves of the conduct and gallantry of the other officers, Lieut. G. G. CUNLIFFE, Lieut. E. CRAIGIE, Local-Ensign CHALMERS, etc., and of the whole of the men engaged on this occasion.

No. 909.

*From THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE ARMY, to THE  
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.*

SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of the Commander-in-Chief, to enclose for the information of the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General, a letter from Brigadier-General WALPOLE, C.B., Commanding Rohilcund Division, No. 220 of the 4th inst., forwarding a report (with enclosure) from Captain R. LARKINS, Commanding 17th P. I., and at Philibeet, of a very successful affair with the rebels at Sirpoorea in that neighbourhood, in which the latter were defeated with considerable slaughter, and with the loss of their guns and camp.

HIS Excellency desires to record his high approval of the spirit and ability evinced in the affair by the Commander, Major Browne of the 2nd P. C., whose very severe wound causes much regret to Sir COLIN CAMPBELL. His Excellency

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further recommends to His Lordship's notice the other gallant officers and men engaged on this occasion.

(Signed) W. MAYHEW, LT.-COL.,  
*Adjutant-General of the Army.*

HEADQUARTERS, ALLAHABAD,  
11th September 1858.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM MANSFIELD, G.C.B.,  
*Chief of the Staff.*

NYNEE TAL, *Sept. 4th, 1858.*

SIR,—\* \* \* I beg to bring to His EXCELLENCY's notice Ensign CHALMERS, 24th Punjab Pioneers, who led the Infantry on this occasion, and whose conduct is highly spoken of. I am glad to have the opportunity of testifying to the indefatigable zeal and intelligence displayed by this officer on all occasions when his services are required,—especially by the assistance he has offered in constructing temporary barracks for the English troops at Bareilly, in consequence of which they have been quickly and remarkably well housed.

(Signed) R. WALPOLE, BRIGADIER-GENERAL,  
*Commanding Rohilcund Division.*

## APPENDIX

No. 55.

TO THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE ARMY.

ARMY HEADQUARTERS, ALLAHABAD,  
CAMP PHILIBEET, 1st September 1858.

SIR,—For the information of His EXCELLENCY the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, I have the honour to report \* \* \* Captain BROWNE speaks highly of the conduct of all engaged, and of the steady advance of all under the fire of the enemy's guns; but most especially of the steady advance of the skirmishers of the 24th Punjab Infantry led by Ensign CHALMERS.

I would here beg to bring Ensign CHALMERS, Officiating Commandant, 24th P. I., prominently to the notice of His EXCELLENCY the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF for his indefatigable zeal and energy at all times and under all circumstances. Since he arrived at Philibeet he has placed the City in a thorough state of defence, and his thorough knowledge of Field Engineering in all branches has been of the greatest service here. As soon as he arrived, he threw up a bridge head for the protection of the bridge of boats, to enable us, in the event of wanting assistance from Bareilly, to keep our communication open with that station, and although the river rose so high and almost destroyed it, as soon as the water subsided he set to work, and in less than three days had another bridge head completed. Besides this, between Sunday and Monday morning last he had completed the entrenching of Nuriah (although part of the day under fire), and there is now a police force there of 300 men and the police *chauki* re-established. Much praise, I consider, is due to Ensign CHALMERS for all that he has done since he

## APPENDIX

has been here, which is my reason for bringing him prominently to the notice of His EXCELLENCY the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

(Signed) ROBERTSON LARKINS, CAPTAIN,  
*Commanding at Philibeet.*

*To CAPTAIN S. BROWNE, Commanding Detachment.*

CAMP NURIAH, 29th August 1857.

SIR,—I have the honour to report for your information  
\* \* \* that great praise is due to ENSIGN CHALMERS and  
the detachment of 24th Punjab Infantry.

(Signed) E. CRAIGIE, LIEUT., 2ND PUNJAB CAVALRY,  
*Commanding Detachment.*

*To CAPTAIN LARKINS, Commanding at Philibeet.*

PHILIBEET, August 31st, 1858.

SIR,—In consequence of the incapability of Captain BROWNE to report the occurrences of yesterday himself, I have the honour to report that, agreeably to your orders,  
\* \* \* two guns commenced playing with round-shot and grape upon the advancing line. The skirmishers, led by Ensign CHALMERS, advanced unshaken at a steady pace, and without firing a shot, up to within about 30 yards of the guns, when they poured in a rapid fire and charged up the ascent.

At the special request of Captain BROWNE, I beg to bring



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to your notice the extremely steady way in which the whole of the infantry advanced under fire of the guns, strictly obeying their orders not to fire a shot till they reached them; the advance of the skirmishers under Ensign CHALMERS was the admiration of all concerned.

(Signed) G. G. CUNLIFFE, LIEUT.,  
*Commanding Field Detachment.*

TRUE EXTRACTS,  
G. B. WOLSELEY, CAPTAIN,  
*Station Staff Officer, Delhi.*



